And Mr. Secretary, thank you for your diligence on this and

other issues and efforts to follow up with my office on a number

of issues.

Let me first ask you about this. Many recent reports characterized

conditions on the ground in Darfur as having somewhat stabilized. And these reports cite relatively steady humanitarian indicators

to back up this assertion. But it seems to me that the people

of Darfur living in the midst of a chronic crisis—I happen to have

had the chance earlier this year to be in Chad and visit one of

those camps, as well, that Senator Biden visited. Not the same

camp, but a similar camp, I think.

They are utterly dependent on international humanitarian assistance

for survival. And in the meantime, humanitarian organizations

are coming under increasingly frequent attack. The people of

Darfur are uprooted from their homes and fearful of security conditions

outside of and sometimes within the camps. And MSF and

other organizations continue to report widespread incidences of

rape.

So there seems to me to be nothing really all that stable at all

about the situation of desperation and vulnerability. What, in your

view, is the realistic time frame or time line for improving the conditions

in which these people are living and creating an environment

of security in which people can voluntarily return to their villages

and rebuild their lives?

Thank you, Mr. Secretary. Just some more

follow-up on the AU force. Consistently, reports from the ground in

Darfur praise the efforts made by the African Union thus far. But

they also underscore the reality that this force is obviously not sufficient

to provide security or protect civilians. And it does not have

confidence of the people in Darfur who have to make judgments

about their own security.

Do you believe that more AU troops on the ground will make a

critical difference in changing these perceptions, or is a stronger

mandate necessary or both? I am curious for your reactions to

those.

But in terms of simply giving them the additional

mandate, you seem skeptical that that alone would—that the

AU by itself, even with the mandate, would be able to handle all

of this. You seem to be suggesting a need for more.

But does that do the job?

My sense from your remarks is that that, by

itself, does not do the job and does necessarily mean that the AU

by itself would have the capacity to handle this situation on its

own.

Let me turn to the North-South process

again. Are you confident that the well-sharing arrangements,

which will be implemented fairly and transparently, given the fact

that the SPLM failed to secure control of either the finance ministry

or the ministry for mining and energy? And what will it take

to sustain a Southerner’s confidence in well-sharing arrangements

in light of these decisions with regard to those key cabinet positions?

Just before my time is up—I guess it is up

right now. Let me just say, in terms of the issue we were talking

about before in Darfur, what the job is, I think it is civilian protection

and providing security so that people feel safe and they can

go home. I heard people in Chad tell me they did not feel safe going

home. And they are not able to go home and rebuild their villages.

The question I asked you is, can the AU do that job?

Well, the only thing that that leaves me concerned

about is does this leave the government of Sudan basically

in the driver’s seat? Do they get to decide whether to disarm and

disband the militias? I mean——