

**SAAF Update 10-2011**  
**[www.SudanAdvocacy.com](http://www.SudanAdvocacy.com)**  
**September 14, 2011**

Dear Sudanese Friends and Friends of the Sudanese People,

The United Nations reported on September 14<sup>th</sup> that more than 100,000 people are estimated to have been displaced as fighting continues between the Sudanese armed forces and rebels fighting for freedom in Blue Nile state continues. Sudan is reported to be negotiating with North Korea to purchase weapons. It brings fighters in from Pakistan, Iraq, Yemen and other areas to fight against their own citizens in the Nuba Mountains; yet the U.S. State Department asks the oppressed to put down their weapons and negotiate!

Negotiate! Have they not observed the butchery in Darfur and in South Sudan? Have they not been victims before? How do they negotiate with an organization which has repetitively shown that it lies and has no intention of carrying out its agreements? How do they negotiate with a government which sees them as inferior, which supports their enslavement, which uses genocide as a "diplomatic" tool, and which has as its objective the destruction of their culture, identity, society, and life itself?

Brad Phillips writes in part: "I was greatly disappointed to read today ... that President Obama's Special Envoy to Sudan, Ambassador Princeton Lyman, has publicly declared his opposition to the concept of a No-Fly Zone for Blue Nile and Southern Kordofan. This statement is in direct contradiction to President Obama's campaign pledge to support a No-fly zone in Sudan.

"I am ashamed that a representative of my government would publicly make such a statement which can only embolden Khartoum's genocidal tendencies giving them a 'green light' to continue the aerial bombing and butchering of innocent civilians in the Nuba Mountains and Blue Nile regions. (add Darfur!)

"All of the diverse people groups in Sudan, whether in Khartoum, Darfur, Kordofan, Kassala or Blue Nile deserve the right to self-determination and basic human dignity. I guess Amb. Lyman has forgotten that the United States of America emerged from a "popular uprising" against a much less egregious form of tyranny...taxation without representation.

"No American should discourage a nation of people, who have been so marginalized, enslaved, butchered, mistreated and denied every basic human right, from .... using every possible means to replace an illegitimate and repressive, genocidal regime with a legitimate representative form of government that will respect the God-given rights of its own people.

I share Brad Phillips thoughts.

It occurs to me that you might sometimes wonder if we are making a difference. "A benefit of advocacy that may not always come readily to mind, particularly when we chisel away at a message with seemingly modest or belated results, is the hope that it gives to those for whom we advocate. Think of our friends in Renk, South Kodofan, the Blue Nile, Khartoum or Abyei who might derive a bit of hope knowing that folks on our side care about their plight and serve as their voice when the world sometimes seems indifferent to the unspeakable horror that they face. Our telling the story of their suffering not only keeps the focus on the terrible violence faced by our Sudanese sisters and brothers but symbolizes our solidarity with some of the world's most desperate people. That matters." AFRECS

Our Sudan Advocacy Action Forum has been advocating for about 10 years, but the Sudanese have been struggling against the oppression of their own government since at least 1955! We must not tire. The need for our continued advocacy never has been clearer. We must change the direction of the U.S. government policy.

In His Service,

**Bill Andress**

Sudan Advocacy Action Forum

### **News Summary provided by Dr. Eleanor Wright, Sudan Advocacy Action Forum**

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**US not supportive of no-fly-zone in Sudan.** US special envoy Princeton Lyman said the US has no intention to push for a no-fly-zone in the Blue Nile or other regions where Khartoum fights rebel groups. Rebel groups in Blue Nile, Darfur and Southern Kordofan have called for a no fly zone. "I can not say that the US or anyone else is prepared to enforce a no-fly zone in Sudan. He further pointed out that the US efforts are focusing on the resumption of negotiations between the parties. Lyman said they are working with the UN and the African Union to hold talks between Khartoum and the SPLM-North over a number of issues that need to be addressed by the two parties. Speaking about Darfur, the special envoy criticized calls by rebel groups to overthrow the government as solution for the conflict. "We do not believe that a commitment to overthrowing the regime is a sensible stand for the parties or the armed movements to take," he pinpointed. He also said he advised the rebel groups to "articulate a political platform and to engage in negotiations with the government on Darfur." The envoy reiterated that the Washington Forum, scheduled for 27-28 September, aims to give an opportunity to the different parties to express themselves "And that we will be able to discuss among ourselves and have a better understanding of what the points of view are and what are the obstacles to further negotiations". (Sudan Tribune, 09/12/2011)

**US diplomat talks on conflicts in Sudan.** The US special envoy Princeton Lyman was in Khartoum September 7 for talks with NCP officials, including Foreign Minister Ali Karti. Following his meetings in Khartoum, Lyman warned authorities in the newly independent South Sudan to avoid military interference in the conflicts in Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile states. Last week authorities in South Sudan denied any involvement in the conflict. However, Khartoum maintains it has evidence that Juba is providing aid to the SPLM-North in Blue Nile state. Lyman urged the SPLM-North and Khartoum to give unhindered access to humanitarian organizations to help the thousands of civilians displaced by the conflict in Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile. Lyman says the recent fighting in Southern Kordofan and

Blue Nile is making it difficult for Washington to normalize relations with Khartoum. (VOA, 09/07/2011)

**Khartoum opens third war front.** Sudan's armed forces (SAF) clashed with the Sudan People's Liberation Army-North (SPLA-N) in Blue Nile State on September 1. The fighting opens a third battle front in North Sudan where conflict is still ongoing in South Kordofan and Darfur. Both sides accused each other of starting the fighting. SAF said that the SPLA-N attacked them in the state capital of Damazin at several points, including the South Gate and the industrial area. SAF also reported fighting outside of Damazin in the towns of Dindiro, Um Darfa, Ulu, and Wad Al Mahi. The SPLA-N denied having taken the offensive, saying that SAF had carried out an attack in Damazin. The SPLA-N said that SAF used all kinds of weapons in densely populated parts of the city, so the SPLA-N forces withdrew from the city for fear that fighting would endanger the lives of civilians. According to a statement attributed to Yasser Arman, Secretary-General of SPLM-North, an entire SAF brigade had surrounded Damazin equipped with 12 tanks and 40 vehicles loaded with Dushka heavy guns. He said their targets were "citizens, the SPLA-N, and the governor's house." A Blue Nile resident told Radio Dabanga that more than 5,000 civilians fled the city of Damazin to the areas of Sennar and Singa. He also named a number of areas that reportedly suffered SAF aerial bombardment. The civilian source referred to the areas that were bombed as areas with concentrations of civilians and completely void of any military presence. (AllAfrica, 09/02/2011)

**Sudan conflict forces 16,000 to flee to Ethiopia.** UN refugee agency UNHCR said that fighting in Sudan's Blue Nile state has forced around 16,000 residents to flee to neighbouring Ethiopia since August 31. High Commissioner for Refugees Antonio Guterres appealed for an immediate end to clashes between Khartoum and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement-North (SPLM-North). The SPLM-North says it has been under attack from SAF and has called for the UN to enforce a no-fly-zone over Blue Nile, South Kordofan and Darfur. Khartoum has accused South Sudan of sending troops to help the rebels, a claim the south denies. Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir declared a state of emergency in Blue Nile on September 2 and fired the province's governor. (Morning Star, 09/04/2011)

**35,000 households displaced in Blue Nile.** Events in Blue Nile have affected over 35,000 households and left large number of people displaced, the Sudanese Red Crescent Society (SRCS) said in a statement September 5. Blue Nile state in the north of Sudan witnessed intensive fighting between the government forces and the opposition group Sudan People's Liberation Army-North (SPLA-North). The Red Crescent described the condition of displaced people as very complex. "Residents were left homeless amid a shortage of basic human needs necessary in the state of Sennar," it said in a statement. Fadhul Mawla Al Hija, minister of Social Affairs in Sudan, told the state news agency that the number of displaced people from the state of Blue Nile to the neighboring Sennar state had reached 20,000 people. The civilians have taken refuge in areas of Abu Hujar, Wad al Nayell, Sinja, Haroun and Khour Doniya. (All Africa, 09/05/2011)

**Sudan bars aid agencies' access to Blue Nile.** Khartoum has denied UN and other aid agencies access to Blue Nile state, where at least 50,000 people have been displaced by fighting, the UN humanitarian office said on September 7. The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) said that fighting, including air strikes, had continued in eight locations since September 4, including around the state capital Damazin, despite government insistence that most of the state has been calm since clashes began. "UN agencies and international humanitarian partners... have requested permission from the government to travel to Sennar (the neighboring state) and to secure parts of northern Blue Nile state to assess the situation and assist in addressing humanitarian needs," OCHA

said in its latest report. "But they have so far been denied access to do so," it said. Khartoum has insisted that aid be provided through national partners such as the Sudanese Red Crescent. (AFP, 09/07/2011)

**Sudanese opposition on warpath.** Sudan's main opposition party, SPLM-North, vowed on September 3 to fight for regime change through armed struggle and mass protests, and called for international support after clashes erupted in Blue Nile state. "The coup against the only state in north Sudan that was able to enforce its will through elections confirms that it is not possible to achieve constitutional change under the present regime," Yasser Arman, secretary general of SPLM-North, said in a statement. "Nothing remains for the Sudanese people but a combination of peaceful mass action to change the system, and armed struggle... extending from Blue Nile in the east to Darfur in the west." On September 2, Khartoum declared a state of emergency in Blue Nile state and appointed a military ruler. The latest violence comes three months after similar fighting erupted in nearby South Kordofan, following disputed elections for the post of governor, which saw the SPLM-North's candidate Abdelaziz Al Hilu withdraw alleging fraud. Arman said he and Hilu met with leaders of three Darfuri rebel groups, including Minni Minnawi, Abdelwahid Nur and Mansur Abdelqadir, to form the nucleus of a united political and military movement for change.

Separately, Arman called for the UN Security Council to enforce a no-fly zone extending from Darfur to Blue Nile, to stop more "ethnic cleansing" and to prevent the air force targeting civilians. He also urged the guarantors of the 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement, particularly the United States, Britain and Norway, to respond to the aggression, and the human rights issues arising from it, "including the displacement of hundreds of thousands of people in South Kordofan and Blue Nile." Blue Nile and South Kordofan are located north of Sudan's new international border, and their residents are Sudanese citizens. But they both have large numbers of loyal SPLM-North supporters and troops. (AFP 09/04/2011)

**Rival Sudans agree to pull out from Abyei.** The governments of Sudan and newly independent South Sudan have agreed to withdraw their troops from the flashpoint border region of Abyei where UN forces are now in place, UN officials said. The Sudanese and South Sudanese governments reached the latest accord during talks in Addis Ababa, Edmond Mulet, UN assistant secretary general for peacekeeping, told reporters after a Security Council meeting on Sudan September 7. The accord was brokered by an African Union mediation panel led by former South African President Thabo Mbeki, Mulet said. "They have agreed that between September 11 and 30 there is going to be a redeployment or withdrawal of the troops" from Abyei by both sides, he said. Sudan had previously agreed to withdraw its troops when UN peacekeepers arrived. The UN force of more than 1,700 Ethiopian troops have been in Abyei for several weeks but Khartoum had kept their forces there. Some South Sudan troops have also remained in the territory. Mulet said the Khartoum government had insisted there had to be an administration in Abyei before it left, but has now agreed to withdraw. The fate of Abyei was left undecided when north and south Sudan split in July. (Aljazeera.net, 09/09/2011)

**South Sudan launches educational loan repayment program.** The Embassy of the Republic of South Sudan in Washington, DC has announced its plan to formally launch a pilot South Sudan Student Loan Forgiveness Program (SSSLFP) for South Sudanese Diaspora in the USA. The SSSLFP is a financial aid program to encourage and maintain skilled South Sudanese Diaspora professionals and graduates to contribute to development at home. Under the SSSLFP, the Government of the Republic of South Sudan will repay student loans based on the duration of the employment as reflected on the service agreement. This program is aimed to pay the loans incurred during the pursuit of an

educational training; bachelor's degree, master's degree or PhD. The work commitment will be primarily in the areas of public service; federal, state and local agencies; nonprofit organizations; public health; military service; and public interest organizations. Those interested can contact the Office of Student Loan Forgiveness Program through the following USA phone number: 202-293-7940 Ext. 29 (Sudan Tribune, 08/24/2011)

**US to grant citizens of South Sudan protected status.** The Obama administration has decided to add the Republic of South Sudan to the list of countries included under the Temporary Protected Status (TPS) program. The move comes as South Sudan gained its independence last July and the United States swiftly recognised it. Sudan was initially designated for TPS in 1997. The current designation expires next November. The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) is expected to announce extension of TPS for Sudan as well. All citizens of South Sudan who entered the US on or before the TPS designation is officially published will qualify regardless of their visa status. However, only Sudanese citizens who entered the country on or before October 7, 2004 will be covered by TPS extension.

TPS is a temporary immigration status granted to nationals of designated countries as part of the US Immigration Act of 1990. The US Congress established a procedure by which the Attorney General may provide TPS to aliens in the United States who are temporarily unable to safely return to their home country because of ongoing armed conflict, the temporary effects of an environmental disaster, or extraordinary and temporary conditions. The registrants are allowed to remain in the United States and obtain work authorization and may not be deported unless they commit certain crimes. However TPS does not lead to permanent residence in the US. Currently nationals of Burundi, Haiti, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua and Somalia are also covered by the program. (All Africa, 09/01/2011)

**Obama names two diplomats to Sudan and South Sudan.** President Barack Obama has tapped two experienced U.S. diplomats to represent him in Khartoum and Juba as tensions grow between Sudan and South Sudan. Mary Carlin Yates, who has served as US ambassador to Ghana and Burundi and as deputy to the commander for Civil-Military Activities of the US Africa Command (Africom), begins September 1 as interim Charge ´ d'Affaires at the US Embassy in Khartoum. Obama also nominated career foreign service officer Susan D. Page as the first US ambassador to South Sudan. Page, who is deputy assistant secretary in the State Department's Africa bureau, is a Harvard-trained attorney who helped draft the 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA).

Yates told AllAfrica the growing crisis in Southern Kordofan will be one of her first priorities. The US government wants "both sides to provide unfettered humanitarian access to affected populations," she said in a telephone interview prior to her departure. She also called for the resumption of negotiations to work out a "permanent cessation of hostilities and a political settlement." Since January, Yates has been in charge of Africa at the National Security Council, where, she said, "Sudan was a major focus for me as well as for the more senior administration officials," including the president.

Page's nomination as ambassador requires Senate confirmation. Prior to her State Department appointment as one of four deputies to Assistant Secretary Johnnie Carson, Page worked on east and southern Africa at the National Democratic Institute and served in the United Nations Mission in Sudan (UNMIS), assisting with implementation of the 2005 agreement. Previously, she headed the Human Rights and Justice Unit for the United Nations Development Programme in Rwanda and served in State Department and USAID posts in Rwanda, Botswana and Kenya. Even with the appointments of Yates and Page, officials say US special envoy Princeton Lyman is expected to maintain his current role. The

administration's Sudan lineup also includes Dane Smith, a former ambassador to Guinea and Senegal and special envoy for Liberia, who has served as lead US negotiator for Darfur since December. (All Africa, 09/01/2011)