



March 19, 2013

Honorable John F. Kerry  
Secretary of State  
U.S. Department of State  
2201 C Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20520

Dear Mr. Secretary,

We understand the President, in coordination with your office, is in the process of selecting a new U.S. Special Envoy to Sudan and South Sudan. We urge you to select an individual with the necessary experience and stature to help guide the Administration in formulating and implementing a comprehensive Sudan policy that will bring an end to conflict and mass atrocities and will support the development of two stable democratic states.

Enclosed, for your reference, is a [letter](#) dated December 11, 2012 from 76 human rights organizations and 12 genocide scholars and other notable human rights advocates urging President Obama to shift U.S. policy in order to save lives, to appropriately and effectively address a regime that is indicted for genocide, and to help bring about a just and lasting peace in Sudan. The letter notes that the administration has “pursued a policy of engagement, marked by conciliatory diplomacy” and that this approach has failed to stop the regime from committing war crimes and mass atrocities.

It has come to our attention that former U.S. Ambassador to Sudan, Timothy Carney, is being considered for the position of Special Envoy. While Ambassador Carney has experience in Sudan, we are concerned that his publicly stated advice and guidance with regard to U.S. policy on Sudan will prolong the suffering of the Sudanese people and will undermine U.S. objectives to support a just peace and stable democracies in Sudan and South Sudan, which ultimately are in the best interest of the U.S. and the international community.

Ambassador Carney provided a preview of his approach to Sudan at the February 12, 2009 [roundtable](#) on U.S. Relations with Sudan, over which you presided as the Chairman of the U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee on Sudan. The discussion provided a timely and still mostly current assessment of the challenges facing Sudan, most notably the governance crisis in Khartoum. Four of the eminent speakers at the roundtable -- Roger Winter, Michael Gerson, Jerry Fowler and John Prendergast -- recommended a tougher more comprehensive approach to Sudan in order to end genocide and mass atrocities, secure peace, and protect U.S. interests. The exception to this consensus was Ambassador Carney who proposed deferring the ICC warrant, sending an ambassador to Khartoum, removing Sudan from the State Sponsors of Terror List, giving Sudan some benefits and sympathy because the US was "moving the goalposts" and opposing efforts to "isolate" Bashir. You ended the roundtable on a high note stating that you were interested in the “no fly zone concept” and you hoped “the players in Darfur, the South and the North all understand that there is going to be a very different effort to galvanize action over the course of the next months and year and this is a moment for serious people to buckle down and find some serious responses.”

A month later, on March 18, 2009, General Scott Gration was appointed Special Envoy for Sudan and implementation of U.S. policy took a worrisome turn that reflected Ambassador Carney’s recommendations. General Gration took a conciliatory “cookies and stars” approach to the regime; he claimed that the U.S. was without leverage in Sudan and that sanctions only hurt the people of Sudan; he criticized the indictment of President Bashir by the ICC saying it made his job harder, and he downplayed the ongoing genocide in Darfur. As a result of his weaker approach, an emboldened regime in Khartoum

expanded its campaign of violence against the Sudanese people; it strengthened its relationship with Iran and support for terrorist and extremist groups; it failed to fully implement the 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA), and it continues to create serious security, humanitarian and economic crises in both Sudan and South Sudan.

As Ambassador Princeton Lyman explained on March 13, 2013 at the University of Pittsburgh, the Comprehensive Peace Agreement “was supposed to bring about a fundamental transformation of politics,” but that transformation did not happen, and, as he described, that failure is having a “fundamental impact on the situation today.” He went on to explain that “what’s happening [with] the people who are fighting in Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile and now more and more with the opposition groups in Darfur is to say, ‘look, it’s not enough to deal with these issues locally, it’s not enough to deal with Darfur or Southern Kordofan or Blue Nile, because the problem, the fundamental problem that hasn’t been changed is the way Sudan is governed, and until you change the way Sudan is governed, you can’t really solve the problem of Darfur, Southern Kordofan or the East, where there’s been unrest as well.”

Ten years of genocide in Darfur that has cost hundreds of thousands of lives, displaced millions of people, and is continuing with no end in sight, and the more recent crushing assault and war crimes committed by the government of Sudan against Sudanese living in the Nuba Mountains and Blue Nile, should convince us that a new, holistic approach supported by like-minded leadership is needed. It is time for the U.S. to take a tougher position with Khartoum. There is ample evidence that it may be the only approach that can make a difference. For example and as documented in the Congressional Research Service report, “Sudan and South Sudan: Current Issues for Congress and U.S. Policy,” dated October 5, 2012, “Sudan did not accept UNSCR 1769 (2007), which authorized the UN force, for almost 10 months, until some UNSC members threatened to tighten sanctions.” In earlier years, some may have believed that limiting pressure on Sudan was warranted by that regime's "cooperation" on anti-terrorism intelligence. However, Sudan's embrace of Iran, Hamas, jihadi fighters from Mali, and Islamic extremists while it simultaneously continues the government-led assaults on Sudanese civilians clearly shows that the government of Sudan is on the wrong side of terrorism. In addition, former U.S. Special Envoy to Sudan, Richard Williamson, stated on March 11, 2013 at the Act for Sudan Emergency Action Summit that “being familiar with a significant quantity of what was learned for cooperation with Salah Gosh, [Sudan’s former intelligence chief, that intelligence] wasn’t worth the spit on your shoe.”

Given the serious human rights violations and national security concerns the U.S. has with regard to Sudan and given the opportunity for positive democratic change that is developing among Sudanese opposition groups and civil society, the new Special Envoy should reflect a more robust policy. This policy should apply lessons learned from the last seven Special Envoys and decades of engagement by the U.S. and the international community in order to save lives, to re-establish the serious nature of and consequences for committing genocide, to reinforce justice and the rule of law, and to accomplish the President's commitment to protect U.S. interests and to help establish peace and stability in and between the two Sudans. We strongly believe that Ambassador Carney is the wrong man for this critical job. Instead, we hope that you will choose someone with the capabilities, perspective and stature of Russ Feingold, Richard Williamson, Howard Berman, or Tom Periello, to name a few.

Thank you for your time and we look forward to your response.

Sincerely,



Eric Cohen  
Co-founder, *Act for Sudan*

cc:

Grant Harris, Special Assistant to the President, Senior Director for African Affairs, National Security Staff  
Members of Congress