

DAILY BULLETIN

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IRAQ NEEDS INTERNATIONAL SECURITY HELP, SAYS POWELL

Notes U.N. resolution on Sudan would offer grace period before sanctions..... 1

USAID GRANTS \$12.3 MILLION TO DEVELOP IRAQI PRIVATE SECTOR

Funds will provide training and technical assistance at business centers..... 2

AMBASSADOR DANFORTH: SECURITY SITUATION IN DARFUR HAS GOTTEN WORSE, NOT BETTER.

Action “on a very short timeframe” is essential 3

SUDANESE REFUGEES IN CHAD SURVIVING UNDER EXTREME CONDITIONS

United States appeals for urgent, coordinated donor response..... 4

IRAQ NEEDS INTERNATIONAL SECURITY HELP, SAYS POWELL

Notes U.N. resolution on Sudan would offer grace period before sanctions

Secretary of State Colin Powell said Iraq continues to need help from the international community to provide security within the country and called upon nations to help protect U.N. workers who will be assisting the country with its upcoming elections.

Speaking with Egyptian Television’s Nihal Saad in Cairo July 28, Powell said that as Iraq’s security forces and interim government gain strength and bring the insurgency under control, “you will see the United States starting to stand back.”

“That’s all we ever wanted to do,” said Powell. “But right now, the Iraqis need help and whatever help they can get from their neighboring countries in the form of economic help or training Iraqi forces, Iraqi police, would be very, very useful.”

Asked about the humanitarian and political crisis in Sudan, Powell said the international community is bringing pressure upon the government in Khartoum to improve access for humanitarian relief, to engage in a political dialogue with rebel leaders, and “above all create a secure environment for the political process to take place and also for aid to be delivered to these desperate people.”

Powell said both the United States and the European Union are considering economic sanctions against Sudan.

“It is not enough of an excuse to say well we don’t want to put sanctions on this regime, we’d rather just see several hundred thousand people go through this terrible period where so many of them will die,” he said.

Describing the situation in Darfur as “catastrophic,” Powell said the international community should put a resolution before the United Nations “that gives Sudan the opportunity to fix this problem before sanctions will be considered,” adding that the resolution would provide a one-month grace period.

Earlier on July 28, Powell met with Egyptian officials, including Prime Minister Ahmed Nazief, and he said he was impressed with Nazief’s initial ideas on reforms.

“This I think will be seen with favor in Washington,” he said. “It’s reform that is coming from within. It’s not reform that the United States is imposing.”

Turning to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, Powell said Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon’s disengagement plan from Gaza and part of the West Bank is “an exciting possibility” consistent with U.N. Security Council resolutions 242 and 338 and the Middle East Road Map.

Sharon, he said, had agreed to remove all 21 Israeli settlements from Gaza, as well as four West Bank settlements “as openers.”

He said a responsible Palestinian leadership needs to emerge, and called upon Palestinian leaders to follow up on promises and statements concerning new security arrangements with “actual results.”

Powell also expressed disappointment with the rate at which Israel is removing unauthorized settlement outposts.

“[T]hey’re not being removed at the rate that we think is appropriate, and we have expressed our disappointment to Prime Minister Sharon,” he said.

USAID GRANTS \$12.3 MILLION TO DEVELOP IRAQI PRIVATE SECTOR

Funds will provide training and technical assistance at business centers

The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) has awarded a \$12.3 million grant to the Volunteers for Economic Growth Alliance (VEGA) to promote Iraqi private sector development over the next 15 months.

According to a July 26 USAID press release, VEGA will use the funds to “establish new business centers and work through existing centers throughout the country to provide training and technical assistance to businesses of all sizes.”

The organization’s advisers and experts will provide Iraqi businesses with training and technical assistance, and help them compete for procurements under supplemental assistance funds, according to the press release.

Following is the text of the USAID press release:

USAID Awards Iraq Private Sector Development Initiative Grant July 26, 2004

WASHINGTON, DC - In support of the reconstruction efforts in Iraq, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) announces the award of a multi-million dollar grant to the Volunteers for Economic Growth Alliance (VEGA) to implement the Iraq Private Sector Development Initiative. The grant award provides funding up to \$12.3 million over the next 15 months.

The VEGA Iraq Private Sector Development Initiative will establish new business centers and work through existing centers throughout the country to provide training and technical assistance to businesses of all sizes. VEGA will leverage access to over 20,000 volunteer advisors and experts covering all industrial and business sectors to provide Iraqi businesses with exposure to successful business methods. Services will include training courses, business kits, and technical assistance to businesses. Additionally, assistance will be provided to firms to compete for procurements under supplemental funds. Businesses who successfully complete the requisite training courses will be eligible to receive small grants to follow-through on implementing changes and pursuing opportunities suggested in training activities.

The VEGA Iraq Private Sector Development Initiative is part of U.S. government reconstruction assistance to the Iraqi people aimed at improving stability, ensuring the delivery of essential services, and facilitating economic recovery.

For more information on USAID's humanitarian relief and reconstruction efforts in Iraq please visit www.usaid.gov/iraq VEGA is an alliance of sixteen economic growth volunteer organizations. More information on VEGA can be found at www.vegaalliance.us.

The U.S. Agency for International Development has provided economic and humanitarian assistance worldwide for more than 40 years.

AMBASSADOR DANFORTH: SECURITY SITUATION IN DARFUR HAS GOTTEN WORSE, NOT BETTER

Action "on a very short timeframe" is essential

The following is the text of a press release issued by the United States Mission to the United Nations in New York.

Remarks by Ambassador John Danforth, US Representative to the United Nations, on the Situation in the Sudan, at the Security Council Stakeout, July 28, 2004

Reporter: (inaudible)

Ambassador Danforth: I think very useful. I think there is a universal recognition that the Darfur is a disaster that the government of Sudan is culpable, and that action on a very short timeframe is essential.

Reporter: (inaudible) sanctions, is that something that the United States would go for?

Ambassador Danforth: What we are talking about is starting the clock ticking and with the passage of the resolution the thirty-day clock would start, and that would in turn be renewed every month. That is really crucial, and the question to be asked on a regular monthly schedule is: is the government of Sudan in compliance with

the commitments that it made in the joint communiqué, if it is not in compliance then something has to follow. Now what would follow necessarily? And my opinion is that we would have to consider sanctions. So the answer to the question is clearly if there is not compliance by the government of Sudan on such a clocklike mechanism as this then the Security Council would have to act and that those actions would have to include sanctions.

Reporter: (inaudible)

Ambassador Danforth: Well, I think it would have to be clear to the government of Sudan that what we mean is sanctions. Now if you want it - you know, I think it was Alfred Kahn who was told he can't use the word inflation he had to use the word banana. So if you wanted to use the word banana, so long as it's clear it equals sanctions. The meaning has to be clear on this clocklike mechanism, sanctions is going to be before the Security Council.

Reporter: (inaudible)

Ambassador Danforth: All I can tell you is what was discussed in the Council and nothing of the kind was discussed.

Reporter: (inaudible)

Ambassador Danforth: I don't underestimate the ability of the government of Sudan to give half a loaf to anything.

Reporter: (inaudible)

Ambassador Danforth: So what we would have to do is on this thirty day clock is make an assessment of what they've done. Now what they've done since July 3rd, since they issued the joint communiqué with the Secretary General is they've done something -- they purported to increase humanitarian access and did so to an extent, but the security situation has gotten worse, not better. And they claim that they've arrested some people, and punished some people. Well, does that really provide for more security or not? So what we would have to do is to take a very, very realistic view of what they've done, not what they've promised to do, not the cosmetic approach that they might take, but the reality.

Reporter: (inaudible)

Ambassador Danforth: Yes it's something we certainly welcome, the participation of the African Union by providing monitors, by protecting the monitors, and now by indicating that they do more than that and actually protect the people. So, that would be very positive.

Reporter: (inaudible)

Ambassador Danforth: Well the prime responsibility of the government of Sudan is not to brutalize its own people, and to protect its own people. That's the prime responsibility, and that's what we're focusing on, not to bomb people, not to arm militias to attack people, not to support people who engage in the burning of villages and rape. That's what's going on in Darfur right now. Human beings are being killed, hundreds of them every day, as a direct result of the actions of the government in Khartoum. As a direct result of its policies hundreds of people every day are being killed. Their responsibility to their people is to stop it - and to stop it now. And the world is watching.

Reporter: (inaudible)

Ambassador Danforth: Well, anybody who kills and burns and so on deserves the condemnation of the world.

Reporter: (inaudible)

Ambassador Danforth: Sorry?

Reporter: (inaudible)

Ambassador Danforth: Well, we hope to get back to the office and take into consideration the comments we heard and put out a final version - put it in blue either tonight or tomorrow morning. Hopefully people have asked because of the time difference between here and their capitals - they've asked for the final draft as quickly as we can get it so we're going to go back to the office and do that.

Reporter: (inaudible) intervention, you know, from the Congress and other quarters, could this AU idea solve the issue about intervention, you know (inaudible).

Ambassador Danforth: There are practical questions as to how security in an area the size of France is provided. And this requires the best thinking of people who are experts in that area. I think that participation of the African Union is very, very important. But I'm not sure exactly

what it would take to give the people of Darfur assurance that they're safe. That's something that people with more technical expertise than I would have the answer to.

Reporter: What would the Ambassador say that all this outrage is driven by internal politics in America? What do you say to that?

Ambassador Danforth: What do I say about that? Are the American people concerned about the people of Darfur? Yes, they are. Are the American people aware of the disaster of Darfur? Yes, they are. Are the American people aware of the stories of burning and rape and plunder and displaced persons? Yes, they are. And do the American people, to their credit, stand up for people half way around the world who are so different from what they are, but are human beings? Yes, the American people care about them. Thanks.

SUDANESE REFUGEES IN CHAD SURVIVING UNDER EXTREME CONDITIONS

United States appeals for urgent, coordinated donor response

By Wendy Lubetkin

Washington File European Correspondent

Geneva -- Responding to the growing needs of an estimated 200,000 Sudanese refugees who have fled into the desert regions of eastern Chad will require a "tremendous effort" by the international community, according to a top U.S. refugee official.

"The situation in Chad is very extreme," Linda Thomas-Greenfield, deputy assistant secretary of state for population, refugees and migration, told a July 28 press conference at the United Nations in Geneva. Malnutrition and diarrheal diseases are on the rise and water supplies are inadequate, she charged.

Aid workers -- living under very difficult conditions themselves -- are struggling to deliver aid to refugees in

Chad, but without additional assistance from international donors they will not be able to meet the growing needs there, she said.

Thomas-Greenfield, who had just returned from a one-week monitoring trip to Chad, was in Geneva to discuss the situation with humanitarian agencies and to encourage donor countries to contribute generously to the cash-strapped relief operation.

The United States is by far the largest donor in Chad, providing 50 to 60 percent of the funding for relief efforts there, Thomas-Greenfield noted, adding that the burden of support needs to be shared more broadly.

Thomas-Greenfield said it is difficult to predict how many additional refugees might arrive in Chad. "The hope is that humanitarian corridors in Darfur will open up so that people do not feel they need to cross the border into Chad to get assistance and protection."

Currently between 200 and 300 refugees are arriving at the border each day. Others may have been prevented from crossing because of insecurity in the region or because of the rains, she said. UNHCR has developed contingency plans for an additional 100,000.

Thomas-Greenfield said delivering food to the refugees in eastern Chad presents one of the "most difficult logistics operations" she has ever witnessed. "The roads are not very good. The rainy season has started. Many of the large trucks cannot traverse the roads during the rainy season. The distances are very, very long."

In the desert where the 11 refugee camps are located, water is "probably the most urgent need," she added. "Without water, all kinds of other problems result, health and sanitation problems."

UNHCR standards call for 15 liters of water per person per day, but some camps in Chad have been able to provide only around six liters per person and, at one camp that Thomas-Greenfield visited, a broken generator meant the refugees would receive no water that day.

Malnutrition and diarrheal illnesses are also on the rise among the refugee population, especially the children, she noted.

Another serious concern is the fact that around 80 percent of the refugees are either women or children. The presence of so many unaccompanied women means that

the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) will need to address some special protection issues, Thomas-Greenfield said. "Women are going out collecting wood alone. Women are home alone with small children."

Thomas-Greenfield said she was particularly struck by the situation of aid workers in Chad who have been living under extremely difficult conditions, some sleeping outdoors without shelter at night. They are "devoting themselves to providing assistance to refugees twenty-four hours a day, and devoting very little attention to their own needs," she said. "Many of them were living without shelter, without water, without food."

She noted that the Chadian government has been "extremely hospitable to refugees, providing land for the camps."

"The communities surrounding the refugee camps have been very open and generous with their support, but these communities are very fragile themselves, living on the edge, in an environment that is very difficult to survive in. ... I think development agencies will also need to look at the situation of the surrounding Chadian communities."

Please Note: Most texts and transcripts mentioned in the U.S. Mission Daily Bulletin are available via our homepage www.usmission.ch. Select "Washington File" from the drop-down menu under "News."