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EXDIS

DECAPTIONED

FOR AF ACTING A/S CHARLES SNYDER

E.O. 12958: DECL: 2/17/2014  
TAGS: PGOV, PHUM, PREL, SU  
SUBJECT: SCORCHED EARTH IN DARFUR AND THE POLICY RESPONSE

REF: A) KHARTOUM 149, B) KHARTOUM 147

REVIEW AUTHORITY: Charles Daris,  
Senior Reviewer

CLASSIFIED BY: GERARD M. GALLUCCI, CHARGE D'AFFAIRES, U.S.  
EMBASSY-KHARTOUM, DEPARTMENT OF STATE.  
REASON: (B), (D)

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EMBASSY-KHARTOUM, DEPARTMENT OF STATE.  
REASON: (B), (D)

1. (C) AS REPORTED IN REF. A AND PREVIOUS CABLES, IN THE PAST WEEK, DOZENS MORE VILLAGES HAVE BEEN BURNED IN THE DARFUR REGION OF SUDAN, FORCING THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE TO SEEK SHELTER NEAR REGIONAL URBAN CENTERS. THE VIOLENCE HAS INTENSIFIED DESPITE A PEACE INITIATIVE ANNOUNCED FEBRUARY 8 BY PRESIDENT BASHIR PROMISING HUMANITARIAN ACCESS, AN END TO VIOLENCE, AN AMNESTY FOR THE REBELS, AND A REGIONAL PEOPLE CONFERENCE. MOST ACCOUNTS NOW PLACE THE DISPLACED POPULATION INSIDE DARFUR ABOVE 500,000 AND UP TO 700,000 OUT OF A TOTAL POPULATION OF SIX MILLION. ANOTHER 100,000 HAVE SOUGHT REFUGE IN CHAD. WHILE THE CONFLICT IS DRIVEN BY DEEP AND HISTORIC TENSIONS BETWEEN THE MINORITY, LARGELY PASTORAL, ETHNIC ARAB TRIBES AND THE MAJORITY SEDENTARY AFRICAN TRIBAL GROUPINGS, [REDACTED]

B1  
1.4(B)  
1.4(D)

2. (C) THE COUNTER-OFFENSIVE AGAINST THE REBELS HAS BEEN DRIVEN BY A COMBINATION OF GOVERNMENT BOMBINGS, AND ARMED AND MOUNTED ARAB MILITIAS (THE "JANJAWAIT"). THE CURRENT PHASE BEGAN IN EARLY JANUARY, AND APPEARS TO HAVE HAD AS ITS GOAL REMOVING ANY REMAINING SUPPORT BASES THE REBELS MIGHT HAVE. THE JANJAWAIT ELEMENTS HAVE VIRTUALLY UNLIMITED OPERATIONAL LATITUDE IN THE DARFUR COUNTRYSIDE, AND ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE SCORCHED EARTH POLICY WHICH HAS LED TO THE SYSTEMATIC AND MASSIVE DISPLACEMENT OF POPULATIONS. THE ARAB MILITIAS ARE TAKING

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ADVANTAGE OF THE GOVERNMENT'S DESIRE TO DESTROY THE SLA/JEM REBELLIONS QUICKLY TO SETTLE LOCAL SCORES, BUT AT LEAST SOME OF THE MILITIAS HAVE BEEN ACTING WITH THE ENCOURAGEMENT OF LOCAL AUTHORITIES WITH TIES TO KHARTOUM. THE HUMANITARIAN DIMENSIONS OF THE CRISIS, WHICH HAS ALSO CLAIMED THOUSANDS OF LIVES IN RECENT MONTHS, ARE ALREADY SERIOUS AND SET TO DETERIORATE UNLESS THE GOVERNMENT REVERSES COURSE NOW.

3. (C) THE SEVERITY OF THE CRISIS WAS CONFIRMED BY A USG DELEGATION LED BY USAID DCHA ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR ROGER WINTER WHICH VISITED THE THREE STATE CAPITALS OF THE DARFUR REGION ON FEBRUARY 14-15. THE DELEGATION MET WITH NEWLY DISPLACED PERSONS, ETHNIC REPRESENTATIVES FROM BOTH SIDES OF THE CONFLICT, LOCAL AUTHORITIES, AND UN AND NGO OFFICIALS, AND WERE WITNESS TO THE POLITICAL TENSIONS, DESTRUCTION AND SUFFERING BROUGHT BY THE CONFLICT. FROM THE AIR, THE TEAM COUNTED LITERALLY DOZENS OF VILLAGES BLACKENED BY FIRE, WITH SMOKE LINES VISIBLE FROM THOSE SET ALIGHT MORE RECENTLY. ON THE FLIGHT BETWEEN EL FASHER AND NYALA, WINTER AND ACCOMPANYING SUDAN GROUP HEAD AMBASSADOR MICHAEL RANNEBERGER AND PRM DAS MIKE MCKINLEY FLEW OVER A STRING OF SETTLEMENTS WITH FLAMES STILL SHOOTING INTO THE SKY. ON THE GROUND, THE DELEGATION VISITED WITH NEWLY DISPLACED POPULATIONS OF WOMEN AND CHILDREN WHO UNIVERSALLY DESCRIBED THE MEN WHO HAD ATTACKED THEIR VILLAGES AS "ARABS" OR "JANJAWAIT."

[REDACTED]

B1  
1.4(B)  
1.4(D)

4. (C) MOST LOCAL AUTHORITIES AND ARAB TRIBAL LEADERS THAT THE DELEGATION MET WITH SOUGHT TO PLACE THE BLAME FOR VIOLENCE ON THE REBELS AND OUTLAWS. THE REALITY IS AS OTHER SOURCES AND AFRICAN TRIBAL SPOKESPERSONS (AND A FEW ARAB ONES) MADE CLEAR, THAT THE JANJAWAIT ARE LARGELY RESPONSIBLE. IN ADDITION, THE POLITICAL TENSIONS OCCASIONED BY THE SLA/JEM REBELLIONS HUNG HEAVY IN THE AIR.

[REDACTED]

DURING THE STAY IN DARFUR, THE DELEGATION ALSO RECEIVED REGULAR REPORTS OF NEW ATTACKS, VILLAGE BURNINGS, AND DISPLACED POPULATIONS, EVEN AS THE LOCAL "WALIS" (GOVERNORS) WERE OFFERING ASSURANCES THAT THE FIGHTING WAS COMING TO AN END. IT WAS IMPOSSIBLE TO TRAVEL OUTSIDE NYALA AND GENEINA. EIGHTY KILOMETERS NORTH OF EL FASHER, AN IDP POPULATION AT KUTUM, WHICH ONLY THREE WEEKS AGO

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VISITING THE CAMP SAW CHILDREN AND OTHERS SUFFERING FROM FRESH AND UNTREATED BULLET WOUNDS, EVEN AS THE GOS AUTHORIZED THE FIRST EMERGENCY WORLD FOOD PROGRAM OPERATIONS IN THE AREA.

5. (C) AS REPORTED REF. B, THE DELEGATION HAD USED EARLIER MEETINGS (FEBRUARY 11-12) WITH SENIOR SUDANESE GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS TO RAISE USG CONCERNS ABOUT THE SITUATION IN DARFUR.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] ON FEBRUARY 16, THE GOVERNMENT LIFTED REMAINING RESTRICTIONS ON OTHER NGOS, AND AS OF THE MORNING OF FEBRUARY 17, APPEARS TO HAVE GRANTED TRAVEL PERMITS TO MSF, GOAL AND OTHER NGOS IT VIEWS AS PROBLEMATIC. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

B1  
1.4(B)  
1.4(D)

6. (C) IT IS NOW EVIDENT, HOWEVER, THAT A PIECEMEAL RESPONSE WILL NOT CONTAIN THE CRISIS IN DARFUR. WE FACE THE PROSPECTS OF AN EVEN GRATER HUMANITARIAN AND HUMAN RIGHTS CRISIS AS LOCAL FOOD RESERVES RUN LOW AND THE GROWING IDP CONCENTRATIONS BEGIN TO CREATE THEIR OWN SANITATION, HEALTH AND SECURITY PROBLEMS. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

7. (C) IN MEETINGS ON FEBRUARY 16-17 WITH SENIOR GOS MINISTERS, RANNEBERGER, MCKINLEY AND THE CHARGE (IN AN APPROACH WORKED OUT WITH DCHA AA WINTER), FORCEFULLY CONVEYED THE SEVERITY OF THE SITUATION AND PROPOSED FOUR COURSES OF ACTION:

- IMMEDIATE HUMANITARIAN ACCESS FOR ALL IOS AND NGOS WILLING TO WORK IN DARFUR. IF SECURITY REMAINS AN ISSUE IN RURAL AREAS, ALLOW HUMANITARIAN PERSONNEL TO WORK IN THE REGIONAL CAPITALS AND SMALLER TOWNS. TRAVEL PERMIT PROCEDURES MUST BE SIMPLIFIED. THE GOS ARMED FORCES SHOULD SEEK TO SECURE MAIN ROADS TO ALLOW THE TRANSPORT OF HUMANITARIAN RELIEF.

- POLITICAL AND, IF NECESSARY, MILITARY, STEPS TO CONTROL THE "JANJAWAIT." SINCE THERE ARE STRONG INDICATIONS THAT MANY OPERATE IN COMPLICITY WITH LOCAL AUTHORITIES AND SECURITY AGENCIES, CALL IN THE MILITIA LEADERS AND ORDER THEM TO HALT OPERATIONS. THIS SHOULD INCLUDE A PUBLIC CALL ON THEM TO DESIST.

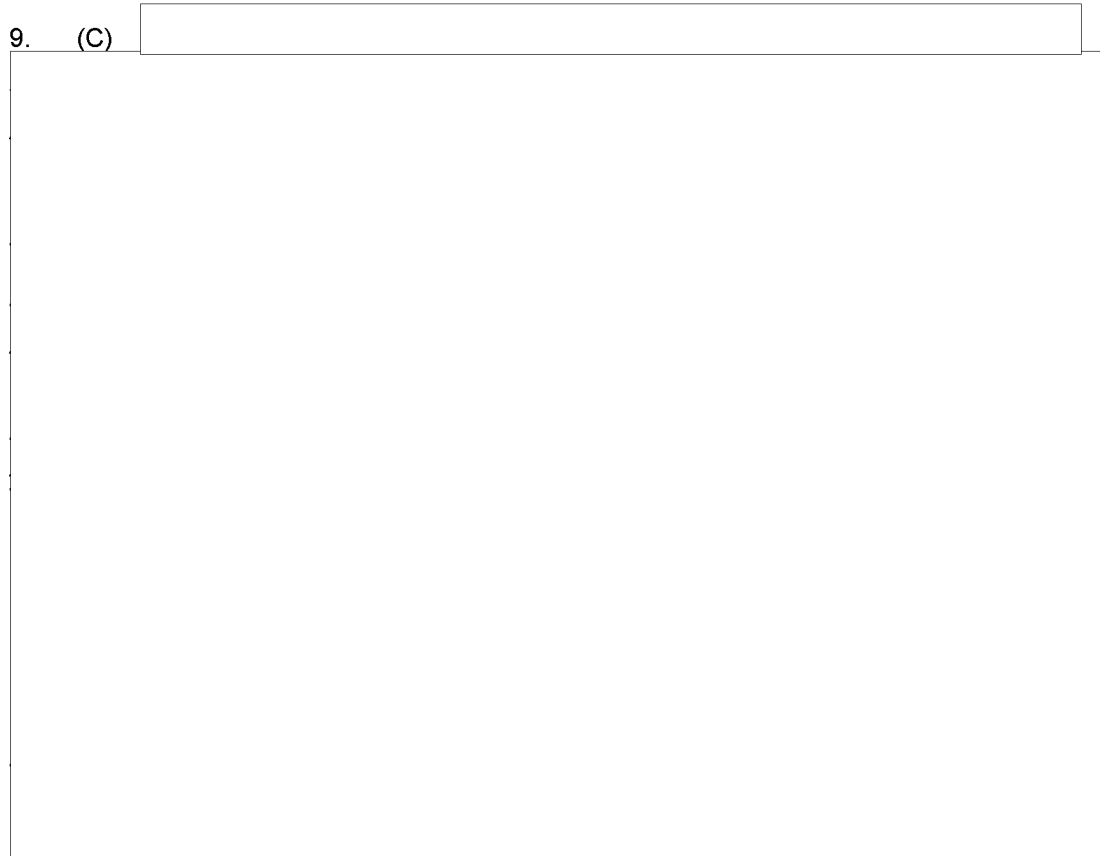
- MOVE ON AN URGENT BASIS TO TALKS WITH THE SLA AND JEM REPRESENTATIVES WITH A VIEW TO ADDRESSING HUMANITARIAN ACCESS AND IMMEDIATE CEASE-FIRE ISSUES. FOLLOW THESE DISCUSSIONS WITH MORE STRUCTURED DIALOGUE ON POLITICAL CONCERNS, IN LINE WITH

PRESIDENT BASHIR'S INITIATIVE WHICH CONTAINS MANY OF THE ELEMENTS OF AN EVENTUAL SETTLEMENT.

- DEPLOY A SMALL INTERNATIONAL MONITORING PRESENCE TO OBSERVE IMPLEMENTATION OF CEASE-FIRE AGREEMENTS. IN THE FEBRUARY 16-17 MEETINGS, WE REITERATED THE OFFER TO HAVE THE CPMT OPERATE IN DARFUR.

8. (C) PER CONVERSATIONS WITH WASHINGTON ON FEBRUARY 15-16, WINTER HAS INITIATED CONTACT WITH SLA REPRESENTATIVES TO EXPLORE THE POSSIBILITY OF DIRECT TALKS WITH THE GOS WITH INTERNATIONAL FACILITATION. IN ADDITION, RANNEBERGER, MCKINLEY AND THE CHARGE MET WITH EUROPEAN UNION REPRESENTATIVES WHO SAID THAT THEIR OWN CONTACTS WITH THE REBELS COULD LEAD TO A DIRECT REBEL-EU MEETING IN SOUTHERN DARFUR AS EARLY AS THIS WEEKEND. THEY ARE PRESSING THE SLA TO DECLARE A CEASE-FIRE TO INCREASE THE LIKELIHOOD OF HUMANITARIAN ACCESS. THE REBELS, HOWEVER, HAVE TOLD BOTH THE BRITISH AMBASSADOR AND THE EMBASSY THAT THEY PLAN TO LAUNCH NEW OFFENSIVES TO RECAPTURE TINE AND KORNOI IN NORTH DARFUR.

9. (C)



B1  
1.4(B)  
1.4(D)

10. (C) THE GOVERNMENT'S PRACTICE HAS BEEN TO OFFER ENOUGH CONCESSIONS TO BUY TIME FOR THE CONSIDERATION OF ALL OPTIONS. THE HUMANITARIAN CRISIS IN DARFUR, AND THE CRITICAL TALKS IN NAIVASHA, NO LONGER ALLOW FOR THE MEASURED (AND CYNICAL) APPROACH. WE MADE CLEAR TO GOS OFFICIALS THAT WE AND OTHERS WILL CONTINUE TO SPEAK OUT CLEARLY ON THE SITUATION IN DARFUR.

11. (C) THIS CABLE DRAFTED BY SPECIAL ADVISOR RANNEBERGER

AND DAS MCKINLEY.

GALLUCCI

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National Security Archive,  
Suite 701, Gelman Library, The George Washington University,  
2130 H Street, NW, Washington, D.C., 20037,  
Phone: 202/994-7000, Fax: 202/994-7005, [nsarchiv@gwu.edu](mailto:nsarchiv@gwu.edu)