



Committee on International Justice and Peace

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April 2, 2009

Special Envoy J. Scott Gration
Special Envoy to Sudan
U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20520

Dear Special Envoy Gration:

On behalf of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) I congratulate you on your appointment as the new Special Envoy to Sudan. Your appointment represents a renewed commitment to bringing peace to Sudan.

The Catholic Church works to protect the life and dignity of every person. Far too many lives and communities have been devastated in Sudan. The Church in the United States and Sudan have worked together to promote peace for more than 20 years. Bishop John Ricard, a member of the USCCB Committee on International Justice and Peace, most recently visited South Sudan last year to express solidarity with the Church in Sudan and to listen to their concerns.

The challenges that you face are daunting and require the immediate and effective leadership of the United States Government. Our Conference of Bishops hopes that you will have at your disposal the human, financial and logistical resources that will be needed to bring the various parties to the conflict in Sudan to a sustainable peace. Sudan has lost already too many lives through civil war. As you take up your new responsibilities, we ask the United States to:

- Aggressively reengage the international community in efforts to ensure the full implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement with an immediate focus on border demarcation, transparency in sharing oil revenues, and free and fair national elections scheduled for 2009.
- Fully evaluate the humanitarian consequences of potential actions intended to pursue justice or bring about peace, such as enforcing a “no-fly” zone, prior to implementation. It is important to recognize that there are no lasting military solutions to the conflicts in Sudan, and maintaining adequate humanitarian access and funding is critical to avoiding further suffering. Maintaining such access and sufficient humanitarian capacity is especially important in light of recent events.

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- Collaborate with relevant regional and international leaders to pressure both the Government of Sudan and the Darfur rebels to establish an effective ceasefire and to bring about a just and durable peace which includes the voice of Darfuri civil society leaders. The declaration of intent between the Justice and Equality Movement and the Government in Khartoum is a good first step. It must now lead to a ceasefire and a durable peace.
- Review current U.S. policy toward the region and develop new strategies that simultaneously and effectively address the situations in Chad, northern Uganda and the Democratic Republic of Congo. A special emphasis should be placed on addressing the movement and action of the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA).

Our Conference of Bishops looks forward to the opportunity to support your efforts to staff your initiative to foster peace in this troubled country. Thank you for your leadership in addressing the critical situation in Sudan.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Howard J. Hubbard". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial "H".

Bishop Howard J. Hubbard
Bishop of Albany
Chairman, Committee on International Justice and Peace