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**United States House of Representatives Committee on Foreign Affairs**  
**Sub-Committee on Africa, Global Health, Global Human Rights and**  
**International Organizations**  
*The U.S. Response to the Political Crisis in Sudan*  
**June 25, 2019**  
**2172 Rayburn House Office Building**

Good afternoon, Chair Bass, Ranking Member Smith, and members of the Sub-Committee. I am pleased to be here with my colleague from USAID to discuss the crisis in Sudan.

I appreciate engagement by this Sub-Committee, and Congress as a whole, in supporting a more peaceful, prosperous, and democratic Sudan. Since the ouster of Omar al-Bashir on April 11, we've been in close contact with your staff to provide updates on the very fluid situation. I want to convey our sincere appreciation for the strong, bipartisan statements of concern surrounding events on the ground.

Our overarching policy goal in Sudan is to support the formation of a civilian-led transitional government that can begin to implement much needed reform and prepare the country for free and fair elections. The Sudanese people have made civilian leadership their clear demand. We seek to help the Sudanese people avoid the many risks – such as continued military rule, a return to conflict among militias or security forces, and the re-emergence of National Congress Party and other political forces that seek to counter their aspirations.

The reprehensible attacks by the security forces under Transitional Military Council (TMC) control – and led by the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) – beginning on June 3 sought to thwart these aspirations. However, the people of Sudan have shown remarkable resilience and determination in the face of this brutal violence. We should seek to be similarly undaunted in supporting their goals of a peaceful transition to a civilian-led government that respects their human rights and fundamental freedoms.

I visited Khartoum a week after the Sudanese people unseated President Bashir and was moved by the passion, dedication and commitment to peaceful change shown by the Sudanese protestors with whom I met.

On June 10, the Department appointed a Special Envoy for Sudan, Ambassador Donald Booth, to lead the Department's efforts to secure a peaceful political solution to the current crisis in Sudan. He and Assistant Secretary Nagy recently travelled to Khartoum and Addis Ababa, and Ambassador Booth is currently again in Khartoum.

We have repeatedly, and at the highest levels, both publicly and privately called [for/on] the TMC to end immediately all attacks on civilians, obstruction of medical care, blocking of the internet, and undue restrictions on the media and civil society. We have urged TMC leadership

to withdraw the RSF from Khartoum and turn over law enforcement to the police as a way of demonstrating that they are ready to negotiate in good faith. The TMC is ultimately responsible for all attacks on civilians by security forces and we have pressed them to allow a credible and independent investigation and to hold those responsible for violence to account.

To be clear, our previous engagement with the Government of Sudan – known as the Phase II process – has been suspended indefinitely. Our hope is to help the Sudanese people achieve a civilian-led government that respects their rights, and then to help that government, working with our international partners, to address the significant economic and political challenges it will inherit from the Bashir regime.

We believe that an agreement between the Sudanese military authorities and the opposition umbrella group called the Forces for Freedom and Change (FFC) on the formation of a civilian-led transitional government is the best possible outcome. The FFC is broadly representative and committed to peaceful engagement. We have encouraged the parties to build upon the agreements made to date and develop a transitional government system that is civilian-led, includes checks and balances to promote consensus, and will govern for a reasonable amount of time, agreed to by the parties, before holding elections. Succeeding in this process will require compromise and courage from Sudan's leaders; we and other partners can play a supportive role.

Sudan's military has an important role to play as a partner in a civilian-led government to rein in militias and safeguard the country. They can choose to be a part of the solution: agree with the FFC and form a civilian-led government and work with them in a transitional government that ends conflicts, implements reforms and leads to free and fair elections. This is the only pathway to a stable Sudan and a better relationship with the United States.

Lastly, we are coordinating with African and international partners and other stakeholders to align our efforts in support of a peaceful resolution and a civilian-led government that heeds the demands of the Sudanese people. We support the role of the African Union and the strong response of the AU Peace and Security Council following the bloody June 3 attack on peaceful protesters. We have also welcomed the engagement of Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy and the work of his envoy on behalf of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) to mediate between the parties in conjunction with the AU. Ambassador Booth and other U.S. officials are in regular contact with the mediators to support their efforts, encourage productive dialogue leading to an agreement, and back them with the full array of options at our disposal, including measures that target those involved in human rights violations and abuses or who undermine the establishment of a peaceful transitional government.

We are coordinating with the African Union, the UN, our Troika and other European partners, and countries in the region, including important stakeholders such as Egypt, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, and Qatar. Senior officials have been engaged in a frank and frequent dialogue with them to coordinate efforts and send a common demand to the TMC to end attacks on civilians and to agree to the formation of a civilian-led government. As we speak, Ambassador Booth is travelling on a whirlwind tour that included stops with me for meetings in London and Berlin in addition to travel to Oslo, Khartoum, Cairo, Abu Dhabi and Riyadh, all happening just days after his trip to Khartoum and Addis earlier this month.

In conclusion, I would like to offer a note of hope. The Sudanese defied all odds in unseating a dictator and offered a glimpse – in that square outside the military headquarters – of Sudan’s vast potential for tolerance, creativity and unity. Sudan’s current leaders have a clear choice -- they can rein in spoilers, resume negotiations and create the kind of government their people have sacrificed so much to achieve, or they can be remembered as those who failed them at their moment of great opportunity.

I look forward to continued engagement on this issue and to your questions.