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Background Note: Sudan



Official Name: Republic of the Sudan



woman shops at a market in Omdurman near Khartoum, Sudan. August 11, 2010. [© AP Images]

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PROFILE

Geography

Area: 2.5 million sq. km. (967,500 sq. mi.); the largest country in Africa and almost the size of continental U.S. east of the Mississippi River.

Cities: *Capital*--Khartoum (pop. 1.4 million). *Other cities*--Omdurman (2.1 million), Port Sudan (pop. 450,000), Kassala, Kosti, Juba (capital of southern region).

Land boundaries: Central African Republic, Chad, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Libya, and Uganda.

Terrain: Generally flat with mountains in east and west. Khartoum is situated at the confluence of the Blue and White Nile Rivers. The southern regions are inundated during the annual floods of the Nile River system (the Suud or swamps).

Climate: Desert and savanna in the north and central regions and tropical in the south.

People

Nationality: *Noun and adjective* (sing. and pl.)--Sudanese.

Population (July 2009 est.): 41,087,825; 43% urban.

Annual population growth rate (2009 est.): 2.143%.

Ethnic groups: Arab/Muslim north and black African/Christian and animist south.

Religions: Islam (official), indigenous beliefs (southern Sudan), Christianity.

Languages: Arabic (official), English (official), tribal languages.

Education: *Years compulsory*--8. *Attendance*--35%-40%. *Literacy*--61.1%.

Health: *Infant mortality rate*--82.43/1,000. *Life expectancy*--51.42 yrs.

Work force: *Agriculture*--80%; *industry and commerce*--7%; *government*--13%.

Government

Independence: January 1, 1956.

Type: Provisional Government established by the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA)

signed in January 2005 that provides for power sharing pending national elections. The national elections took place from April 11-15, 2010.

Constitution: The Interim National Constitution was adopted on July 6, 2005. It was drafted by the National Constitutional Review Commission, as mandated by the January 2005 CPA. The Government of Southern Sudan also has a constitution adopted in December 2005; it was certified by the Ministry of Justice to be in conformity with the Interim National Constitution and the Comprehensive Peace Agreement.

Branches: *Executive*--executive authority is held by the president, who also is the prime minister, head of state, head of government, and commander in chief of the armed forces; effective July 9, 2005, the executive branch includes a first vice president and a vice president. As stipulated by the Comprehensive Peace Agreement and Interim National Constitution, the first vice president position is held by the president of Southern Sudan, assuming the president is from the North. *Legislative*--National Legislature. The National Assembly, the lower house, has 450 elected members; an additional 46 seats will be appointed under a political agreement between the two CPA parties to resolve disputes over the accuracy of districting based on the May 2008 census. There is also an upper house, the Council of States, which is composed of two representatives from each of the nation's 25 states, and two observers from the Abyei Area. *Judicial*--High Court, Minister of Justice, Attorney General, civil and special tribunals.

Administrative subdivisions: Twenty-five states, most with an elected governor, along with a state cabinet and elected state legislative assembly.

Political parties: Currently there are many political parties in both the nation's north and south. Seventy-two parties registered to take part in the April 2010 elections. All political parties were banned following the June 30, 1989 military coup. Political associations, taking the place of parties, were authorized in 2000. Some parties are in self-imposed exile. The principal national parties are the National Congress Party (NCP), which attracts mainly northern support, and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM), a southern Sudan-based party. These two parties are signatories to the CPA.

Central government budget (2007 est.): \$9.201 billion.

Defense (2005 est.): 3% of GDP.

Economy

GDP (2009 est.): \$92.81 billion

GDP annual growth rate (2009 est.): 3.8%.

Per capita income GDP (2009 est.): \$2,300.

Avg. annual inflation rate (2009 est.): 12.3%.

Natural resources: Modest reserves of oil, natural gas, gold, iron ore, copper, and other industrial metals.

Agriculture: *Products*--cotton, peanuts, sorghum, sesame seeds, gum arabic, sugarcane, millet, livestock.

Industry: *Types*--motor vehicle assembly, cement, cotton, edible oils and sugar refining.

Trade: *Exports* (2009 est.)--\$8.464 billion f.o.b.: crude oil and petroleum products, cotton, gold, sorghum, peanuts, gum arabic, sugar, meat, hides, live animals, and sesame seeds.

Major markets China, Japan, Indonesia, Egypt, United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, Malaysia, South Korea. *Imports* (2009 est.)--\$6.823 billion f.o.b.: oil and petroleum products, oil pipeline, pumping and refining equipment, chemical products and equipment, wheat and wheat flour, transport equipment, foodstuffs, tea, agricultural inputs and machinery, industrial inputs and manufactured goods. *Major suppliers*--European Union, China, Malaysia, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, United Arab Emirates, and India.

Fiscal year: January 1-December 31.

PEOPLE

Sudan's population is one of the most diverse on the African continent. Within two distinct major cultures--Arab and black African--there are hundreds of ethnic and tribal subdivisions and language groups, which make effective collaboration among them a major political challenge.

The northern states cover most of the Sudan and include most of the urban centers. Most of the 30 million Sudanese who live in this region are Arabic-speaking Muslims, though the majority also uses a non-Arabic mother tongue--e.g., Nubian, Beja, Fur, Nuban, Ingessana, etc. Among these are several distinct tribal groups: the Kababish of northern Kordofan, a camel-raising people; the Ja'alin and Shaigiyya groups of settled tribes along the rivers; the semi-nomadic Baggara of Kordofan and Darfur; the Hamitic Beja in the Red Sea area and Nubians of the northern Nile areas, some of whom have been resettled on the Atbara River;

and the Nuba of southern Kordofan and Fur in the western reaches of the country.

The southern region has a population of around 8 million and a predominantly rural, subsistence economy. Except for a 10-year hiatus, southern Sudan has been embroiled in conflict, resulting in major destruction and displacement since independence. The conflict has severely affected the population of the South, resulting in over 2 million deaths and more than 4 million people displaced between 1983 and 2005. The Southern Sudanese practice mainly indigenous traditional beliefs, although Christian missionaries have converted some. The South also contains many tribal groups and many more languages than are used in the north. The Dinka--whose population is estimated at more than 1 million--is the largest of the many black African tribes in Sudan. The Shilluk and the Nuer are among the Nilotic tribes. The Azande, Bor, and Jo Luo are Sudanic tribes in the west, and the Acholi and Lotuhu live in the extreme south, extending into Uganda.

According to new census results released in early 2009, Sudan's population has reached an estimated 41.1 million.

HISTORY

Sudan was a collection of small, independent kingdoms and principalities from the beginning of the Christian era until 1820-21, when Egypt conquered and unified the northern portion of the country. However, neither the Egyptian nor the Mahdist state (1883-1898) had any effective control of the southern region outside of a few garrisons. Southern Sudan remained an area of fragmented tribes, subject to frequent attacks by slave raiders.

In 1881, a religious leader named Muhammad ibn Abdalla proclaimed himself the Mahdi, or the "expected one," and began a religious crusade to unify the tribes in western and central Sudan. His followers took on the name "Ansars" (the followers) which they continue to use today and are associated with the single largest political grouping, the Umma Party, led by a descendant of the Mahdi, Sadiq al Mahdi.

Taking advantage of dissatisfaction resulting from Ottoman-Egyptian exploitation and maladministration, the Mahdi led a nationalist revolt culminating in the fall of Khartoum in 1885. The Mahdi died shortly thereafter, but his state survived until overwhelmed by an invading Anglo-Egyptian force under Lord Kitchener in 1898. While nominally administered jointly by Egypt and Britain, Britain exercised control, formulated policies, and supplied most of the top administrators.

Independence

In February 1953, the United Kingdom and Egypt concluded an agreement providing for Sudanese self-government and self-determination. The transitional period toward independence began with the inauguration of the first parliament in 1954. With the consent of the British and Egyptian Governments, Sudan achieved independence on January 1, 1956, under a provisional constitution. This constitution was silent on two crucial issues for southern leaders--the secular or Islamic character of the state and its federal or unitary structure. However, the Arab-led Khartoum government reneged on promises to southerners to create a federal system, which led to a mutiny by southern army officers that launched 17 years of civil war (1955-72).

Sudan has been at war with itself for more than three-quarters of its existence. Since independence, protracted conflict rooted in deep cultural and religious differences have slowed Sudan's economic and political development and forced massive internal displacement of its people. Northerners, who have traditionally controlled the country, have sought to unify it along the lines of Arabism and Islam despite the opposition of non-Muslims, southerners, and marginalized peoples in the west and east. The resultant civil strife affected Sudan's neighbors, as they alternately sheltered fleeing refugees or served as operating bases for rebel movements.

In 1958, General Ibrahim Abboud seized power and pursued a policy of Arabization and Islamicization for both North and South Sudan that strengthened Southern opposition. General Abboud was overthrown in 1964 and a civilian caretaker government assumed control. Southern leaders eventually divided into two factions, those who advocated a federal solution and those who argued for self-determination, a euphemism for secession since it was assumed the south would vote for independence if given the choice.

Until 1969, there was a succession of governments that proved unable either to agree on a permanent constitution or to cope with problems of factionalism, economic stagnation, and ethnic dissidence. These regimes were dominated by "Arab" Muslims who asserted their Arab-Islamic agenda and refused any kind of self-determination for southern Sudan.

In May 1969, a group of communist and socialist officers led by Colonel Gaafar Muhammad Nimeiri, seized power. A month after coming to power, Nimeiri proclaimed socialism (instead of Islamism) for the country and outlined a policy of granting autonomy to the South. Nimeiri in turn was the target of a coup attempt by communist members of the government. It failed and Nimeiri ordered a massive purge of communists. This alienated the Soviet Union, which withdrew its support.

Already lacking support from the Muslim parties he had chased from power, Nimeiri could no longer count on the communist faction. Having alienated the right and the left, Nimeiri turned to the south as a way of expanding his limited powerbase. He pursued peace initiatives with Sudan's hostile neighbors, Ethiopia and Uganda, signing agreements that committed each signatory to withdraw support for the other's rebel movements. He then initiated negotiations with the southern rebels and signed an agreement in Addis Ababa in 1972 that granted a measure of autonomy to the South. Southern support helped him put down two coup attempts, one initiated by officers from the western regions of Darfur and Kordofan who wanted for their region the same privileges granted to the south.

However, the Addis Ababa Agreement had no support from either the secularist or Islamic Northern parties. Nimeiri concluded that their lack of support was more threatening to his regime than lack of support from the south so he announced a policy of national reconciliation with all the religious opposition forces. These parties did not feel bound to observe an agreement they perceived as an obstacle to furthering an Islamist state. The scales against the peace agreement were tipped in 1979 when Chevron discovered oil in the south. Northern pressure built to abrogate those provisions of the peace treaty granting financial autonomy to the south. Ultimately in 1983, Nimeiri abolished the Southern region, declared Arabic the official language of the South (instead of English) and transferred control of Southern armed forces to the central government. This was effectively a unilateral abrogation of the 1972 peace treaty. The second Sudan civil war began in January 1983 when southern soldiers mutinied rather than follow orders transferring them to the North.

In September 1983, as part of an Islamicization campaign, President Nimeiri announced that traditional Islamic punishments drawn from Shari'a (Islamic Law) would be incorporated into the penal code. This was controversial even among Muslim groups. Amputations for theft and public lashings for alcohol possession became common. Southerners and other non-Muslims living in the north were also subjected to these punishments.

In April 1985, while out of the country, Nimeiri was overthrown by a popular uprising in Khartoum provoked by a collapsing economy, the war in the south, and political repression. Gen. Suwar al-Dahab headed the transitional government. One of its first acts was to suspend the 1983 constitution and disband Nimeiri's Sudan Socialist Union.

Elections were held in April 1986, and a civilian government took over power. There were tentative moves towards negotiating peace with the south. However, any proposal to exempt the south from Islamic law was unacceptable to those who supported Arabic supremacy. In 1989, an Islamic army faction led by General Umar al-Bashir mounted a coup and installed the National Islamic Front. The new government's commitment to the Islamic cause intensified the North-South conflict.

The Bashir government combined internal political repression with international Islamist activism. It supported radical Islamist groups in Algeria and supported Iraq's invasion of Kuwait. Khartoum was established as a base for militant Islamist groups: radical movements and terrorist organizations like Osama Bin Laden's al Qaida were provided a safe haven and logistical aid in return for financial support. In 1996, the UN imposed sanctions on Sudan for alleged connections to the assassination attempt on Egyptian President Mubarak.

Meanwhile, the period of the 1990s saw a growing sense of alienation in the western and eastern regions of Sudan from the Arab center. The rulers in Khartoum were seen as less and less responsive to the concerns and grievances of both Muslim and non-Muslim populations across the country. Alienation from the "Arab" center caused various groups to grow

sympathetic to the southern rebels led by the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A), and in some cases, prompted them to flight alongside it.

The policy of the ruling regime toward the South was to pursue the war against the rebels while trying to manipulate them by highlighting tribal divisions. Ultimately, this policy resulted in the rebels' uniting under the leadership of Colonel John Garang. During this period, the SPLM/A rebels also enjoyed support from Ethiopia, Eritrea, and Uganda. The Bashir government's "Pan-Islamic" foreign policy, which provided support for neighboring radical Islamist groups, was partly responsible for this support for the rebels.

The 1990s saw a succession of regional efforts to broker an end to the Sudanese civil war. Beginning in 1993, the leaders of Eritrea, Ethiopia, Uganda, and Kenya pursued a peace initiative for the Sudan under the auspices of the Intergovernmental Authority for Development (IGAD), but results were mixed. Despite that record, the IGAD initiative promulgated the 1994 Declaration of Principles (DOP) that aimed to identify the essential elements necessary to a just and comprehensive peace settlement; i.e., the relationship between religion and the state, power sharing, wealth sharing, and the right of self-determination for the south. The Sudanese Government did not sign the DOP until 1997 after major battlefield losses to the SPLA. That year, the Khartoum government signed a series of agreements with rebel factions under the banner of "Peace from Within." These included the Khartoum, Nuba Mountains, and Fashoda Agreements that ended military conflict between the government and significant rebel factions. Many of those leaders then moved to Khartoum where they assumed marginal roles in the central government or collaborated with the government in military engagements against the SPLA. These three agreements paralleled the terms and conditions of the IGAD agreement, calling for a degree of autonomy for the south and the right of self-determination.

End to the Civil War

In July 2002, the Government of Sudan and the SPLM/A reached an historic agreement on the role of state and religion and the right of southern Sudan to self-determination. This agreement, known as the Machakos Protocol and named after the town in Kenya where the peace talks were held, concluded the first round of talks sponsored by the IGAD. The effort was mediated by retired Kenyan General Lazaro Sumbeiywo. Peace talks resumed and continued during 2003, with discussions focusing on wealth sharing and three contested areas.

On November 19, 2004, the Government of Sudan and the SPLM/A signed a declaration committing themselves to conclude a final comprehensive peace agreement by December 31, 2004, in the context of an extraordinary session of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) in Nairobi, Kenya--only the fifth time the Council has met outside of New York since its founding. At this session, the UNSC unanimously adopted Resolution 1574, which welcomed the commitment of the government and the SPLM/A to achieve agreement by the end of 2004, and underscored the international community's intention to assist the Sudanese people and support implementation of the comprehensive peace agreement. In keeping with their commitment to the UNSC, the Government of Sudan and the SPLM/A initialed the final elements of the comprehensive agreement on December 31, 2004. The two parties formally signed the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) on January 9, 2005. The U.S. and the international community welcomed this decisive step forward for peace in Sudan.

GOVERNMENT AND POLITICAL CONDITIONS

Elections

National elections took place from April 11-15, 2010. The elections were largely peaceful. However, there were widespread irregularities reported during the polling and counting periods, as well as serious restrictions on political space in both north and south leading up to and during the elections. The NCP and SPLM won the overwhelming majority of the electoral races, and incumbent presidents were elected for the Government of Sudan and the semi-autonomous Government of Southern Sudan.

Comprehensive Peace Agreement

The 2005 CPA established a new Government of National Unity and the interim Government of Southern Sudan and called for wealth-sharing, power-sharing, and security arrangements between the two parties. The historic agreement provides for a ceasefire, withdrawal of troops from southern Sudan, and the repatriation and resettlement of refugees. It also stipulated that by the end of the fourth year of an interim period there would be elections at all levels,

including for national and southern Sudan president, state governors, and national, southern Sudan, and state legislatures. These elections were held in April 2010.

On July 9, 2005, the Presidency was inaugurated with al-Bashir sworn in as President and John Garang, SPLM/A leader, installed as First Vice President of Sudan. Ratification of the Interim National Constitution followed. The Constitution declares Sudan to be a "democratic, decentralized, multi-cultural, multi-ethnic, multi-religious, and multi-lingual State."

On July 30, 2005, the charismatic and revered SPLM leader John Garang died in a helicopter crash. The SPLM/A immediately named Salva Kiir, Garang's deputy, as First Vice President of the Government of National Unity and President of the Government of Southern Sudan.

Implemented provisions of the CPA include the formation of the National Legislature, appointment of Cabinet members, establishment of the Government of Southern Sudan and the signing of the interim Southern Sudan Constitution, and the appointment of state governors and adoption of state constitutions. The electoral law paving the way for national elections was passed in July 2008, and elections were held at six levels in April 2010. Laws governing the Southern Sudan and Abyei referenda and the popular consultations in Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile were passed in December 2009, and the parties agreed in February 2010 to begin demarcation of the north-south border.

New CPA-mandated commissions have also been created. Thus far, those formed include the National Electoral Commission, Assessment and Evaluation Commission, National Petroleum Commission, Fiscal and Financial Allocation and Monitoring Commission, and the North-South Border Commission. The Ceasefire Political Commission, Joint Defense Board, and Ceasefire Joint Military Committee were also established as part of the security arrangements of the CPA.

With the establishment of the National Population Census Council, a population census was conducted in April/May 2008 in preparation for national elections that took place from April 11-15, 2010. The results from the census were released in early 2009. The CPA mandated that a referendum be held no later than January 2011, giving southerners the opportunity to vote either for unity within Sudan or separation, and that a parallel referendum be held for the people of Abyei to determine whether they wish to remain in the North or join the South.

On January 15, 2011 the week-long Southern Sudan referendum concluded, and official results were announced on February 7, 2011. More than 3.85 million people, or 97.58% of registered voters, participated with 98.83% voting for secession according to the final results. During the February 7, 2011 announcement ceremony, the Government of Sudan thanked the international community and issued the following statement: "In accordance with the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) and the Constitution of 2005, we accept the referendum result, and we renew our commitment to building constructive relations with the new state in the South." On the same day, President Barack Obama congratulated the people of Southern Sudan, and announced the United States' intent to formally recognize Southern Sudan as a sovereign, independent state in July 2011. In a separate statement on February 7, 2011, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton congratulated all of Sudan, and signaled the United States would initiate the process of withdrawing Sudan's state sponsor of terrorism designation.

While significant progress has been made since 2005, and completion of the referendum is a major achievement, several post-referendum issues--including citizenship, security, debt, oil management, wealth sharing, and currency--remained unresolved as of April 2011. The parties continue to work through these issues, and the United States remains actively engaged through its support of the African Union High Level Implementation Panel (AUHIP) and its chairman, President Thabo Mbeki.

The status of Abyei also remained unresolved as of April 2011. Although the boundaries of Abyei were defined through arbitration in The Hague in July 2009, and both sides have accepted the arbitration decision, issues persist and the Abyei boundary has not been demarcated. In August 2009, in conjunction with discussions facilitated by the United States, the two CPA parties signed an agreement charting a path forward on 10 points critical to implementation of the CPA. The parties continue to work through issues related to CPA implementation.

Popular consultations in Blue Nile are underway, citizen hearings have been completed, and technical hearings should begin in April 2011. The process in Southern Kordofan remains on hold until state-level elections scheduled for May are concluded; voter registration for the May elections was completed in February 2011.

In March 2011, Princeton N. Lyman became U.S. Special Envoy for Sudan, replacing J. Scott Gration.

Darfur

In 2003, while the historic north-south conflict was on its way to resolution, increasing reports began to surface of attacks on civilians, especially aimed at non-Arab tribes in the extremely marginalized Darfur region of Sudan. A rebellion broke out in Darfur, led by two rebel groups--the Sudan Liberation Movement/Army (SLM/A) and the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM). These groups represented agrarian farmers who are mostly non-Arabized black African Muslims. In seeking to defeat the rebel movements, the Government of Sudan increased arms and support to local, rival tribes and militias, which have come to be known as the "Janjaweed." Their members were composed mostly of Arabized black African Muslims who herded cattle, camels, and other livestock. Attacks on the civilian population by the Janjaweed, often with the direct support of Government of Sudan Armed Forces (SAF), have led to the death of hundreds of thousands of people in Darfur, with an estimated 2 million internally displaced people and another 250,000 refugees in neighboring Chad.

On September 9, 2004, Secretary of State Colin L. Powell told the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, "genocide has been committed in Darfur and that the Government of Sudan and the Janjaweed bear responsibility--and that genocide may still be occurring." President George W. Bush echoed this in July 2005, when he stated that the situation in Darfur was "clearly genocide."

Intense international efforts to solve the crisis got underway, and a cease-fire between the parties was signed in N'Djamena, Chad, on April 8, 2004. However, despite the deployment of an African Union (AU) military mission to monitor implementation of the cease-fire and investigate violations, violence continued. The SLM/A and JEM negotiated with the Government of Sudan under African Union auspices, resulting in an agreement being signed regarding additional protocols addressing the humanitarian and security aspects of the conflict on November 9, 2004. Like previous agreements, however, these were violated by both sides. Talks resumed in Abuja on June 10, 2005, resulting in a July 6 signing of a Declaration of Principles. Further talks were held in the fall and early winter of 2005 and covered power sharing, wealth sharing, and security arrangements. These negotiations were complicated by a split that occurred in SLM/A leadership. The SLM/A now had a faction loyal to Minni Minawi and a faction loyal to Abdel Wahid.

The African Union, with the support of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), the U.S., and the rest of the international community, began deploying a larger monitoring and observer force in October 2004. The UNSC had passed three resolutions (1556, 1564, and 1574), all intended to compel the Government of Sudan to rein in the Janjaweed, protect the civilian population and humanitarian participants, seek avenues toward a political settlement to the humanitarian and political crisis, and recognize the need for the rapid deployment of an expanded African Union mission in Darfur. The U.S. has been a leader in pressing for strong international action by the United Nations and its agencies.

A series of UNSC resolutions in late March 2005 underscored the concerns of the international community regarding Sudan's continuing conflicts. Resolution 1590 established the UN Mission in Sudan (UNMIS) for an initial period of 6 months and decided that UNMIS would consist of up to 10,000 military personnel and up to 715 civilian police personnel. It requested UNMIS to coordinate with the African Union Mission in Sudan (AMIS) to foster peace in Darfur, support implementation of the CPA, facilitate the voluntary return of refugees and internally displaced persons, provide humanitarian demining assistance, and protect human rights. The resolution also called on the Government of Sudan and rebel groups to resume the Abuja talks and support a peaceful settlement to the conflict in Darfur, including ensuring safe access for peacekeeping and humanitarian operations.

Resolution 1591 criticized the Government of Sudan and rebels in Darfur for having failed to comply with several previous UNSC resolutions, for ceasefire violations, and for human rights abuses. The resolution also called on all parties to resume the Abuja talks and to support a

peaceful settlement to the conflict in Darfur; it also forms a monitoring committee charged with enforcing a travel ban and asset freeze of those determined to impede the peace process or violate human rights. Additionally, the resolution demanded that the Government of Sudan cease conducting offensive military flights in and over the Darfur region. Finally, Resolution 1593 referred the situation in Darfur to the prosecutor of the International Criminal Court (ICC) and called on the Government of Sudan and all other parties to the conflict in Darfur to cooperate with the ICC.

Following the UNSC resolutions and intense international pressure, the Darfur rebel groups and the Government of Sudan resumed negotiations in Abuja, Nigeria in early 2006. On May 5, 2006, the government and an SLM/A faction led by Minni Minawi signed the Darfur Peace Agreement (DPA). Unfortunately, the conflict in Darfur intensified shortly thereafter, led by rebel groups who refused to sign. In late August government forces began a major offensive on rebel areas in Northern Darfur. On August 30, the Security Council adopted UNSCR 1706, authorizing the transition of AMIS to a larger more robust UN peacekeeping operation. To further facilitate an end to the conflict in Darfur, President Bush announced the appointment of Andrew S. Natsios as the Special Envoy for Sudan on September 19, 2006.

In an effort to resolve Sudan's opposition to a UN force, UN Secretary General Kofi Annan and African Union Commission Chair Alpha Oumar Konare convened a meeting of key international officials and representatives of several African and Arab states in Addis Ababa on November 16, 2006. The agreement reached with the Government of Sudan provided for graduated UN support to AMIS culminating in the establishment of a joint "hybrid" AU-UN peacekeeping operation in Darfur.

International efforts in 2007 focused on rallying support for DPA signatory and non-signatory rebel movements to attend renewed peace talks, and on finalizing plans for the joint AU/UN hybrid operation. UN Security Council Resolution 1769 was adopted on July 31, 2007, providing the mandate for a joint AU/UN hybrid force to deploy to Darfur with troop contributions from African countries. The Joint AU-UN Mission in Darfur (UNAMID) was to assume authority from AMIS in the field no later than December 31, 2007.

Following the passage of UNSCR 1769, a conference was held August 3-5 in Arusha, Tanzania between key UN and AU officials and delegates from Darfur rebel groups. Many movements' political and military leaderships were brought into the discussion in preparation for earnest peace talks. Peace talks between the Government of Sudan and rebel factions took place in Sirte, Libya on October 27, 2007. However, limited rebel participation and continuing disagreement about objectives and processes limited the effectiveness of these talks. Following the Sirte talks, the SPLM hosted workshops in Juba, Southern Sudan, to unite the rebel groups and allow them to come together to present a common front during negotiations. The Juba talks led to a consolidation of rebel factions down to five groups from an estimated 27. On December 21, 2007 President Bush announced the appointment of Richard S. Williamson as Special Envoy for Sudan, following the resignation of Andrew S. Natsios.

On July 14, 2008 the Chief Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court (ICC), Luis Moreno-Ocampo, announced that he was seeking an arrest warrant for President Bashir for allegedly masterminding genocide, war crimes, and crimes against humanity in Darfur. In order to move quickly to find a solution to the violence in Darfur under the pressure of a possible ICC indictment, Sudan opened the Sudan People's Initiative in October 2008. The conference brought together many Darfur rebel groups with the government for a conference to explore solutions and how to better implement the existing framework of the DPA. It culminated in the announcement of a unilateral Darfur ceasefire, which was reportedly violated within days of the declaration.

On March 4, 2009 the ICC announced that it was issuing an arrest warrant for President Bashir for crimes against humanity and war crimes. The three-judge panel that issued the warrant did not feel there was enough evidence to include the crime of genocide on the warrant. In response to the ICC indictment, the Government of Sudan expelled 13 international non-government organizations (NGOs) and closed down three Sudanese NGOs, which severely hindered international humanitarian aid efforts in Darfur. Despite the warrant for his arrest, Bashir has traveled freely to a number of countries in Africa and the Middle East since his indictment.

In early 2009, the Joint African Union-United Nations Chief Mediator Djibril Bassole convened talks in Doha, Qatar, between the Government of Sudan and several Darfuri rebel groups, most notably JEM. Although JEM and the government signed a goodwill agreement in February 2009, talks collapsed in May over prisoner swaps and humanitarian access.

Throughout the summer of 2009, the AU-UN mediation team worked individually with the parties and civil society to prepare for a new round of negotiations, while President Obama's Special Envoy to Sudan, J. Scott Gration, supported these efforts by working to unify a number of splintered rebel factions in preparation for negotiations, and pressing the government to commit to a new round of talks. In November 2009, the mediation team organized a series of meetings in Doha between the parties and Darfuri civil society in an effort to better represent the voices of the Darfuri people in the peace process.

On January 15, 2010, Sudan and Chad signed an accord in N'Djamena, Chad, to secure their joint border and remove the threat posed to one another by cross-border rebel proxies operating on Sudanese and Chadian territory. The U.S. supported the signing of this agreement, which, if fully implemented, could help to improve the security situation on the ground in Darfur. On April 13, 2010, the parties announced that elements of the joint border force had been deployed and the border had been officially opened for commerce and transit.

On February 3, 2010, the ICC Appeals Court decided that the original three-judge panel used too high an evidentiary standard to omit genocide from the March 4, 2009, indictment of Bashir, and instructed the panel to revisit its decision. On July 12, 2010 the ICC issued a second arrest warrant for Bashir, adding genocide to charges of war crimes and crimes against humanity.

On February 23, 2010, the Government of Sudan and JEM signed a 12-point framework agreement in Doha, in which the parties agreed to a ceasefire, a prisoner release, and the opening of a new round of formal negotiations. In the wake of this initial progress with JEM, several other armed movements, including SLA factions unified by the efforts of the U.S. and Libya, joined together in Doha under the umbrella of the Liberation and Justice Movement (LJM). On March 18, 2010, the Government of Sudan and the LJM signed a framework agreement and a ceasefire. Although negotiations in Doha were suspended during the April 11-15 national elections, talks between the Government of Sudan and the LJM resumed in June 2010. On May 3, JEM announced that it was "freezing" its participation in the Doha talks due to the Government of Sudan's offensive against JEM positions in Jebel Moon, West Darfur. Since that time, the talks between the Government of Sudan and the LJM have continued. The African Union/United Nations Joint Chief Mediator announced at the beginning of September, along with the host Government of Qatar, a timeline that would produce a final outcome document from these negotiations. Doha mediation teams have continued to work on a final document, with JEM sending a small delegation on December 16, 2010 and Abdul Wahid's faction of the SLA considering sending representation following a press by the international community for negotiations without preconditions. The Government of Sudan has urged the conclusion of the Doha talks in favor of a Darfur Political Process (DPP). The DPP would include consultations with a broad spectrum of Darfur civil society members, in addition to rebel groups, and culminate in the All-Darfur Conference (ADC), an inclusive forum intended to establish a corporate representation of Darfuris to finalize the elements of a political settlement for Darfur. The United States continues to support the Doha process as there are ongoing concerns about the enabling environment for talks in Darfur.

Humanitarian Situation

Sudan continues to cope with the countrywide effects of conflict, displacement, and insecurity. During more than 20 years of conflict between the Government of Sudan and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A), violence, famine, and disease killed more than 2 million people, forced an estimated 600,000 people to seek refuge in neighboring countries, and displaced approximately 4 million others within Sudan, creating the world's largest population of internally displaced people. Since the 2005 signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA), which officially ended the North-South conflict, the UN estimates that nearly 2 million displaced people have returned to Southern Sudan and the Three Areas of Southern Kordofan, Blue Nile, and Abyei. As of September 2009, the UN estimated that Lord's Resistance Army (LRA)-related violence had displaced approximately 85,000 people in Southern Sudan, including more than 18,000 refugees from the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Central African Republic. In addition, inter-ethnic conflict in Jonglei, Upper Nile, and Lakes states has killed more than 2,000 people and displaced approximately 250,000 individuals since January 2009.

In March 2009, following the ICC's issuance of the arrest warrant for Bashir, the Government of Sudan expelled 13 international humanitarian aid organizations from Sudan and shut down three national aid organizations in a decision it publicly claimed was "long-overdue." These organizations served as U.S. Government and UN implementing partners for the provision of, among other services, water and sanitation, health care, and protection, and their forced departure, according to the UN, affects 50% of aid delivery in Sudan. In the absence of expelled non-governmental organizations (NGOs), UN agencies and remaining NGOs stepped in to fill some of the critical gaps and address immediate humanitarian needs. The UN, the United States, and other members of the international community have since urged the Government of Sudan to reverse its decision on the expulsions, to identify and respond to gaps in life-saving operations, and to facilitate an orderly transition to working through the remaining NGOs. On March 18, 2009 President Obama announced the appointment of J. Scott Gration as the U.S. Special Envoy to Sudan. Special Envoy Gration negotiated with the Government of Sudan to allow the entry of four new NGOs to help address the humanitarian gaps. The Government of Sudan has been somewhat cooperative regarding the loosening of some administrative and bureaucratic impediments that have hindered the fast and effective delivery of humanitarian assistance in the past.

The conflict in the western region of Darfur entered its seventh year in 2010, despite a 2006 peace agreement--the Darfur Peace Agreement (DPA)--between the Government of National Unity and one faction of the Sudan Liberation Army, that of Minni Minawi. It remains to be seen whether the ongoing Doha peace process will be able to effectively help quell the fighting in Darfur among armed opposition group factions, the Sudanese Armed Forces, and militias, which continued to displace thousands of civilians into 2010--230,000 since January 2008 alone. The complex emergency in Darfur affects approximately 4.2 million people, including more than 2.7 million internally displaced people, approximately 250,000 refugees in Chad, and approximately 50,000 refugees in the Central African Republic.

The U.S. Government is the leading international donor to Sudan and has contributed more than \$8 billion in humanitarian, development, peacekeeping, and reconstruction assistance for the people in Sudan and eastern Chad since 2005, including more than \$2 billion in FY 2009 alone. The U.S. Mission in Sudan has declared disasters due to the complex emergency on an annual basis since 1987. On October 1, 2009, President Obama renewed the Sudan complex emergency disaster declaration for FY 2010. The U.S. Government continues to lead the international effort to support implementation of the CPA, while providing for the humanitarian needs of conflict-affected populations throughout the country. U.S. Government humanitarian assistance to Sudan includes food aid, provision of health care, water, sanitation, and hygiene, as well as programs for nutrition, agriculture, protection, and economic recovery.

Principal Government Officials

President, Prime Minister, and Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces--Lt. Gen. Omar Hassan Ahmed al-Bashir

First Vice President--Salva Kiir Mayardit

Vice President--Ali Osman Muhamad Taha

Foreign Minister--Ahmed Ali Karti

Ambassador to the U.S.--Sudan is represented by Charge d'Affaires John Ukec Lueth

Ambassador to the UN--Daffa-Alla Elhag Ali Osman

Sudan maintains an [embassy](#) in the United States at 2210 Massachusetts Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20008 (tel: (202) 338-8565; fax: (202) 667-2406); and a Consular Office at 2612 Woodley Place, NW, Washington, DC 20008 (tel: (202) 232-1492; fax: (202) 232-1494).

The regional Government of Southern Sudan maintains a [liaison office](#) in the United States at 1233 20th St. NW, Suite 602, Washington, DC 20036 (tel: (202) 293-7940; fax: (202) 293-7941).

ECONOMY

In 2004, the cessation of major north-south hostilities and expanding crude oil exports resulted in 6.4% GDP growth and a near doubling of GDP per capita since 2003. The aftereffects of the 21-year civil war and very limited infrastructure, however, present obstacles to stronger growth and a broader distribution of income. The country continued taking some steps toward transitioning from a socialist to a market-based economy, although the government and

governing party supporters remained heavily involved in the economy.

Sudan's primary resources are agricultural, but oil production and export have taken on greater importance since October 2000. Although the country is trying to diversify its cash crops, cotton, and gum arabic remain its major agricultural exports. Grain sorghum (dura) is the principal food crop, and millet and wheat are grown for domestic consumption. Sesame seeds and peanuts are cultivated for domestic consumption and increasingly for export. Livestock production has vast potential, and many animals, particularly camels and sheep, are exported to Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and other Arab countries. However, Sudan remains a net importer of food. Problems of irrigation and transportation remain the greatest constraints to a more dynamic agricultural economy.

The country's transportation facilities consist of 5,978 kilometers of railways, 16 airports with paved runways, and about 11,900 kilometers of paved and gravel road--primarily in greater Khartoum, Port Sudan, and the north. Some north-south roads that serve the oil fields of central/south Sudan have been built; and a 1,400 kilometer. (840 miles) oil pipeline goes from the oil fields via the Nuba Mountains and Khartoum to the oil export terminal in Port Sudan on the Red Sea.

Sudan's limited industrial development consists of agricultural processing and various light industries located in Khartoum North. In recent years, the GIAD industrial complex introduced the assembly of small autos and trucks, and some heavy military equipment such as armored personnel carriers and the proposed "Bashir" main battle tank. Although Sudan is reputed to have great mineral resources, exploration has been quite limited, and the country's real potential is unknown. Small quantities of asbestos, chromium, and mica are exploited commercially.

Extensive petroleum exploration began in the mid-1970s and might cover all of Sudan's economic and energy needs. Significant finds were made in the Upper Nile region and commercial quantities of oil began to be exported in October 2000, reducing Sudan's outflow of foreign exchange for imported petroleum products. There are indications of significant potential reserves of oil and natural gas in southern Sudan, the Kordofan region and the Red Sea province.

Historically, the U.S., the Netherlands, Italy, Germany, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and other Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) have supplied most of Sudan's economic assistance. Sudan's role as an economic link between Arab and African countries is reflected by the presence in Khartoum of the Arab Bank for African Development. The World Bank had been the largest source of development loans.

Sudan will require extraordinary levels of program assistance and debt relief to manage a foreign debt exceeding \$21 billion, more than the country's entire annual gross domestic product. During the late 1970s and 1980s, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), World Bank, and key donors worked closely to promote reforms to counter the effect of inefficient economic policies and practices. By 1984, a combination of factors--including drought, inflation, and confused application of Islamic law--reduced donor disbursements, and capital flight led to a serious foreign-exchange crisis and increased shortages of imported inputs and commodities. More significantly, the 1989 revolution caused many donors in Europe, the U.S., and Canada to suspend official development assistance, but not humanitarian aid.

However, as Sudan became the world's largest debtor to the World Bank and IMF by 1993, its relationship with the international financial institutions soured in the mid-1990s and has yet to be fully rehabilitated. The government fell out of compliance with an IMF standby program and accumulated substantial arrearages on repurchase obligations. A 4-year economic reform plan was announced in 1988 but was not pursued. An economic reform plan was announced in 1989 and implementation began on a 3-year economic restructuring program designed to reduce the public sector deficit, end subsidies, privatize state enterprises, and encourage new foreign and domestic investment. In 1993, the IMF suspended Sudan's voting rights and the World Bank suspended Sudan's right to make withdrawals under effective and fully disbursed loans and credits. Lome Funds and European Union agricultural credits, totaling more than 1 billion euros, also were suspended.

Sudan produces about 401,000 barrels per day (b/d) (2005 est.) of oil, which brought in about \$1.9 billion in 2005 and provides 70% of the country's total export earnings. Although final

figures are not yet available, these earnings may have risen to an estimated \$2 billion as of the end of 2004. Oil production in Sudan as of 2007 was at 466,100 barrels of oil a day. With a resolution of its 21-year civil war between the North and South, Sudan and its people can now begin to reap the benefit from its natural resources, rebuild its infrastructure, increase oil production and exports, and be able to attain its export and development potential.

In 2000-2001, Sudan's current account entered surplus for the first time since independence. In 1993, currency controls were imposed, making it illegal to possess foreign exchange without approval. In 1999, liberalization of foreign exchange markets ameliorated this constraint somewhat. Exports other than oil are largely stagnant. The small industrial sector remains in the doldrums, and Sudan's inadequate and declining infrastructure inhibits economic growth.

DEFENSE

The Sudan People's Armed Forces is a 100,000-member army supported by a small air force and navy. Irregular tribal and former rebel militias and Popular Defense Forces supplement the army's strength in the field. This is a mixed force, having the additional duty of maintaining internal security. During the 1990s, periodic purges of the professional officer corps by the ruling Islamist regime eroded command authority as well as war-fighting capabilities. Indeed, the Sudanese Government admitted it was incapable of carrying out its war aims against the SPLA without employing former rebel and Arab militias to fight in support of regular troops. Additionally, as mandated in the CPA, the Southern Sudanese maintain their own armed forces in the form of the SPLA.

Sudan's military forces historically have been hampered by limited and outdated equipment. In the 1980s, the U.S. worked with the Sudanese Government to upgrade equipment with special emphasis on airlift capacity and logistics. All U.S. military assistance was terminated following the military coup of 1989. Oil revenues have allowed the government to purchase modern weapons systems, including Hind helicopter gunships, Antonov medium bombers, MiG 23 fighter aircraft, mobile artillery pieces, and light assault weapons. Sudan now receives most of its military equipment from China, Russia, and Libya.

The Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) in southern Sudan is currently in the process of transformation from a guerrilla force to a professional military organization.

FOREIGN RELATIONS

Solidarity with other Arab countries has been a feature of Sudan's foreign policy. When the Arab-Israeli war began in June 1967, Sudan declared war on Israel. However, in the early 1970s, Sudan gradually shifted its stance and was supportive of the Camp David Accords.

Relations between Sudan and Libya deteriorated in the early 1970s and reached a low in October 1981, when Libya began a policy of cross-border raids into western Sudan. After the 1985 coup in Sudan, the military government resumed diplomatic relations with Libya, as part of a policy of improving relations with neighboring and Arab states. In early 1990, Libya and the Sudan announced that they would seek "unity," but this unity was not implemented.

During the 1990s, as Sudan sought to steer a nonaligned course, courting Western aid and seeking rapprochement with Arab states, its relations with the U.S. grew increasingly strained. Sudan's ties with countries like North Korea and Libya and its support for regional insurgencies such as Egyptian Islamic Jihad, Eritrean Islamic Jihad, Ethiopian Islamic Jihad, Palestinian Islamic Jihad, Hamas, Hezbollah, and the Lord's Resistance Army generated great concern about its contribution to regional instability. Allegations of the government's complicity in the assassination attempt against the Egyptian President in Ethiopia in 1995 led to UNSC sanctions against the Sudan. By the late 1990s, Sudan experienced strained or broken diplomatic relations with most of its nine neighboring countries. However, since 2000, Sudan has actively sought regional rapprochement that has rehabilitated most of these relations.

U.S.-SUDANESE RELATIONS

Sudan broke diplomatic relations with the U.S. in June 1967, following the outbreak of the Arab-Israeli War. Relations improved after July 1971, when the Sudanese Communist Party attempted to overthrow President Nimeiri, and Nimeiri suspected Soviet involvement. U.S. assistance for resettlement of refugees following the 1972 peace settlement with the south added further improved relations.

On March 1, 1973, Palestinian terrorists of the "Black September" organization murdered U.S.

Ambassador Cleo A. Noel and Deputy Chief of Mission Curtis G. Moore in Khartoum. Sudanese officials arrested the terrorists and tried them on murder charges. In June 1974, however, they were released to the custody of the Egyptian Government. The U.S. Ambassador to the Sudan was withdrawn in protest. Although the U.S. Ambassador returned to Khartoum in November, relations with the Sudan remained static until early 1976, when President Nimeiri mediated the release of 10 American hostages being held by Eritrean insurgents in rebel strongholds in northern Ethiopia. In 1976, the U.S. decided to resume economic assistance to Sudan.

In late 1985, there was a reduction in staff at the U.S. Embassy in Khartoum because of the presence in Khartoum of a large contingent of Libyan terrorists. In April 1986, relations with Sudan deteriorated when the U.S. bombed Tripoli, Libya. A U.S. Embassy employee was shot on April 16, 1986. Immediately following this incident, all non-essential personnel and all dependents left for 6 months. At this time, Sudan was the single largest recipient of U.S. development and military assistance in sub-Saharan Africa. However, official U.S. development assistance was suspended in 1989 in the wake of the military coup against the elected government, which brought to power the National Islamist Front led by General Bashir.

U.S. relations with Sudan were further strained in the 1990s. Sudan backed Iraq in its invasion of Kuwait and provided sanctuary and assistance to Islamic terrorist groups. In the early and mid-1990s, Carlos the Jackal, Osama bin Laden, Abu Nidal, and other terrorist leaders resided in Khartoum. Sudan's role in the radical Pan-Arab Islamic Conference represented a matter of great concern to the security of American officials and dependents in Khartoum, resulting in several draw downs and/or evacuations of U.S. personnel from Khartoum in the early-mid 1990s. Sudan's Islamist links with international terrorist organizations represented a special matter of concern for the U.S. Government, leading to Sudan's 1993 designation as a state sponsor of terrorism and a suspension of U.S. Embassy operations in Khartoum in 1996. In October 1997, the U.S. imposed comprehensive economic, trade, and financial sanctions against the Sudan. In August 1998, in the wake of the East Africa embassy bombings, the U.S. launched cruise missile strikes against Khartoum. The last U.S. Ambassador to the Sudan, Ambassador Tim Carney, departed post prior to this event and no new ambassador has been designated since. The U.S. Embassy is headed by a Charge d'Affaires. The Embassy continues to re-evaluate its posture in Sudan, particularly in the wake of the January 1, 2008, killings of a U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) employee and his Sudanese driver in Khartoum.

The U.S. and Sudan entered into a bilateral dialogue on counterterrorism in May 2000. Sudan has provided concrete cooperation against international terrorism since the September 11, 2001, terrorist strikes on New York and Washington. However, although Sudan publicly supported the international coalition actions against the al Qaeda network and the Taliban in Afghanistan, the government criticized the U.S. strikes in that country and opposed a widening of the effort against international terrorism to other countries. Sudan remains on the state sponsors of terrorism list.

In response to the Government of Sudan's continued complicity in unabated violence occurring in Darfur, President Bush imposed new economic sanctions on Sudan in May 2007. The sanctions blocked assets of Sudanese citizens implicated in Darfur violence, and also sanctioned additional companies owned or controlled by the Government of Sudan. Sanctions continue to underscore U.S. efforts to end the suffering of the millions of Sudanese affected by the crisis in Darfur.

Despite policy differences the U.S. has been a major donor of humanitarian aid to the Sudan throughout the last quarter-century. The U.S. was a major donor in the March 1989 "Operation Lifeline Sudan," which delivered 100,000 metric tons of food into both government and SPLA-held areas of the Sudan, thus averting widespread starvation. In 1991, the U.S. made major donations to alleviate food shortages caused by a 2-year drought. In a similar drought in 2000-2001, the U.S. and the international community responded to avert mass starvation in the Sudan. In 2001 the Bush administration named a presidential envoy for peace in the Sudan to explore what role the U.S. could play in ending Sudan's civil war and enhancing the delivery of humanitarian aid. Andrew Natsios and subsequently Ambassador Richard Williamson served as presidential envoys to Sudan during the Bush administration. On March 18, 2009 President Obama announced the appointment of J. Scott Gration as the U.S. Special Envoy to Sudan.

On October 19, 2009, Secretary Clinton, accompanied by Special Envoy Gration and U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations Susan Rice, announced the Obama administration's new Sudan strategy. U.S. strategy in Sudan is comprised of three core principles: 1) Achieving a definitive end to conflict, gross human rights abuses, and genocide in Darfur; 2) Implementation of the North-South Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) that results in a peaceful post-2011 Sudan, or an orderly path toward two separate and viable states at peace with each other; and 3) Ensuring that Sudan does not provide a safe haven for international terrorists.

In March 2011, Princeton N. Lyman was appointed U.S. Special Envoy for Sudan.

Principal U.S. Officials

Ambassador--vacant

Charge d'Affaires--Robert E. Whitehead

Deputy Chief of Mission--Dennis Hankins

USAID Director--Bill Hammink

Political-Economic Chief--Helen C. Hudson

Public Affairs Officer--William Bellis

The [U.S. Embassy](#) in Sudan is located at Embassy Road, Kilo 10, Soba, off Wad Medani Highway, Khartoum (tel. 249-187-022000). Hours are 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Sunday through Thursday.

TRAVEL AND BUSINESS INFORMATION

Travel Alerts, Travel Warnings, Trip Registration

The U.S. Department of State's Consular Information Program advises Americans traveling and residing abroad through Country Specific Information, Travel Alerts, and Travel Warnings.

Country Specific Information exists for all countries and includes information on entry and exit requirements, currency regulations, health conditions, safety and security, crime, political disturbances, and the addresses of the U.S. embassies and consulates abroad. **Travel Alerts** are issued to disseminate information quickly about terrorist threats and other relatively short-term conditions overseas that pose significant risks to the security of American travelers.

Travel Warnings are issued when the State Department recommends that Americans avoid travel to a certain country because the situation is dangerous or unstable.

For the latest security information, Americans living and traveling abroad should regularly monitor the Department's Bureau of Consular Affairs Internet web site at <http://travel.state.gov>, where current [Worldwide Caution](#), [Travel Alerts](#), and [Travel Warnings](#) can be found. The travel.state.gov website also includes information about [passports](#), tips for [planning a safe trip](#) abroad and more. More travel-related information also is available at <http://www.usa.gov/Citizen/Topics/Travel/International.shtml>.



The Department's [Smart Traveler](#) app for U.S. travelers going abroad provides easy access to the frequently updated official country information, travel alerts, travel warnings, maps, U.S. embassy locations, and more that appear on the travel.state.gov site. Travelers can also set up e-itineraries to keep track of arrival and departure dates and make notes about upcoming trips. The app is compatible with iPhone, iPod touch, and iPad (requires iOS 4.0 or later).

The Department of State encourages all U.S. citizens traveling or residing abroad to register via the [State Department's travel registration](#) website or at the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate abroad (a link to the registration page is also available through the Smart Traveler app). Registration will make your presence and whereabouts known in case it is necessary to contact you in an emergency and will enable you to receive up-to-date information on security conditions.

Emergency information concerning Americans traveling abroad may be obtained by calling 1-888-407-4747 toll free in the U.S. and Canada or the regular toll line 1-202-501-4444 for callers outside the U.S. and Canada.

Passports

The [National Passport Information Center](#) (NPIC) is the U.S. Department of State's single, centralized public contact center for U.S. passport information. Telephone: 1-877-4-USA-PPT (1-877-487-2778); TDD/TTY: 1-888-874-7793. Passport information is available 24 hours, 7 days a week. You may speak with a representative Monday-Friday, 8 a.m. to 10 p.m., Eastern Time, excluding federal holidays.

Health Information

Travelers can check the latest health information with the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta, Georgia. A hotline at 800-CDC-INFO (800-232-4636) and a web site at <http://wwwn.cdc.gov/travel/default.aspx> give the most recent health advisories, immunization recommendations or requirements, and advice on food and drinking water safety for regions and countries. The CDC publication "Health Information for International Travel" can be found at <http://wwwn.cdc.gov/travel/contentYellowBook.aspx>.

More Electronic Information

Department of State Web Site. Available on the Internet at <http://www.state.gov>, the Department of State web site provides timely, global access to official U.S. foreign policy information, including more **Background Notes**, the Department's **daily press briefings** along with the directory of **key officers** of Foreign Service posts and more. The Overseas Security Advisory Council (OSAC) provides security information and regional news that impact U.S. companies working abroad through its website <http://www.osac.gov>

Export.gov provides a portal to all export-related assistance and market information offered by the federal government and provides trade leads, free export counseling, help with the export process, and more.

Mobile Sources. Background Notes are available on mobile devices at <http://m.state.gov/mc36882.htm>, or use the QR code below.



In addition, a mobile version of the Department's <http://www.state.gov> website is available at <http://m.state.gov>, or use the QR code below. Included on this site are Top Stories, remarks and speeches by Secretary Clinton, Daily Press Briefings, Country Information, and more.



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