



Deputy Assistant Secretary Swan Discusses U.S. Policies in Africa with Uganda Journalists

James Swan, Deputy Assistant Secretary for African Affairs

Roundtable Held In Amb. Browning's Residence

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[Photos](#)

MR SWAN: Thanks very much for coming. My name is Jim Swan. I am the Deputy Assistant Secretary for African Affairs at the State Department in Washington and I cover Central and East Africa -- that is my portfolio. I thought what I might do -- before we get into what may be some questions that you want to raise specifically with respect to Uganda -- is just give an overview of our Africa policy in general at the moment, more as background, but please feel free to use it as you want.

Our policy toward Africa is really driven by two broad policy documents or statements that reflect American policy worldwide. One is the March 2006 National Security Strategy of the United States, that was issued by President Bush. If you haven't read this and you are interested in U.S. policy internationally, I would strongly encourage you to read this document. It lays out in quite considerable detail what our policy views are on a host of issues in terms of what our interests are and our objectives worldwide. So that is one core document that drives our Africa policy and I will talk a little bit more about that in a moment.

A second document that again drives American diplomacy worldwide, but also in Africa, is a speech that Secretary Rice made in early 2006 on the topic of what she termed "Transformational Diplomacy." The core of this really is first of all that the United States needs to move away from a Cold War structure in terms of how it manages its diplomacy overseas; it needs to look at new regions of the world that are of increasing interest to us that were perhaps not the same focus of attention during the Cold War period, and among those regions is Africa.

The Transformational Diplomacy approach also emphasizes the idea of partnership -- that, as the Secretary puts it, we need to move away from doing things for people and instead focus on doing things with others. And so I think these two documents are really at the center of our international policy, including our policy toward Africa. Now going back for a moment to the National Security Strategy, our Assistant Secretary for African Affairs, Jendayi Frazer, who has been through here before on a number of occasions likes to summarize the National Security Strategy as it applies to Africa as being an effort to work with Africans to make the continent, as she puts it, "safer, freer, and better." And let me just explain briefly what is meant by those three terms, which I admit are rather general.

Under the safer rubric -- working with Africans to make the continent safer -- we are really talking about the peace and security agenda. There are many aspects to this but let me just mention a few. Clearly two priorities for us at the moment in the area of conflict resolution are of course the situation in Sudan and also the situation in Somalia. Very briefly on Sudan we are essentially pursuing a two-track policy that emphasizes on the one hand, political resolution of the conflict in Darfur. We have been actively encouraging non-signatories to the Darfur peace agreement to cohere around a common agenda and to engage with the Khartoum government in further negotiations using the Darfur peace agreement as a base from which further settlement can be reached. That is the political track with respect to Sudan. The other track is of course the deployment of a peacekeeping operation. On that, we and really the entire international community subscribe to what has become known as the Annan Plan that was agreed in Addis Ababa in November that there should be a three phase move to deployment of a hybrid UN African Union peacekeeping operation in Sudan under UN command and authority. We are very actively continuing to work to persuade the Khartoum government to accept that plan.

Let me talk briefly about Somalia. This is still under the rubric of the peace and security agenda. In Somalia, we think that there is a new opportunity with the routing of the Council of Islamic Courts in December. That perhaps for the first time since 1991 we may be in a position to support international efforts that could lead to reestablishment of a functional Somali government. Our policy with respect to Somalia is really guided by other multilateral institutions. We are active supporters of the African Union consensus around the need for deployment of an African peace support operation, AMISOM, to which Ugandans have contributed troops, but also the need to provide support to the Transitional Federal Government and to work with that government to broaden its base to increase its legitimacy within Somalia. Those are really the three tracks to our policy in Somalia: the AMISOM deployment, support for the transitional government and efforts to get the government to broaden its base. Our core goal there is a secure and stable Somalia that can respond to the needs of its people, can prepare for the transition in 2009 from a transitional government to a permanent government, and of course, can deny Somalia as a terrorist safe haven that would threaten not only global interests that are affected by terrorists but more specifically interests in the Horn of Africa and East Africa.

So those are a couple of examples under the rubric of making Africa safer on peace and security. Let me mention a few others: we are also very actively interested in supporting successful post-conflict transitions that need to continue to be nurtured. These are places such as Liberia, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Burundi.

Certainly, in the cases of Liberia and Democratic Republic of Congo, we place heavy emphasis on continuing UN peacekeeping operations until security and political conditions permit those peacekeeping operations to downsize. Also under the rubric of peace and security, we have a number of other activities including our African Contingency Operations Training Assistance program ACOTA that we have used to train more than twenty thousand African peacekeepers since the inception of the program in 1997. The intent is to build the capacity of African militaries to respond to UN and African peacekeeping operations. Also under the rubric of peace and security, or making Africa safer, we have a host of activities in the area of counter-terrorism, including in the Sahelian area, the Trans Sahara counter-terrorism program, and other activities in East Africa as well. So that is under the general rubric of making Africa safer.

In the second category of making Africa freer: this is essentially the democracy, governance, human rights agenda. And here again, across the continent, we continue to support programs that advance democratization defined rather broadly to include not just elections - although we do provide extensive support to countries that are organizing elections, as we did here in Uganda -- but it also includes other institutions that are critical to the effective functioning of democracies including Parliaments, including judicial reform, including working with civil society and media organizations. Because all of these are elements that are critical to underpinning a functional democracy and that remains again a second core objective that we have continent-wide.

The third category -- I mentioned "safer," which is essentially the peace and security agenda, and "freer" which is essentially the democracy governance, human rights transparency agenda -- and then the final category which is perhaps the most broadly captured in the word "better" -- help Africans to make the continent better. This is essentially the development agenda. As some of you may know, U.S. assistance to Africa has more than tripled since 2000, in excess now of \$5 billion a year. This includes obviously a host of development assistance programs. It also includes very heavy investments in the health sector particularly with the PEPFAR program - the President's Emergency Plan For AIDS Relief - a five-year, \$15 billion program that has committed very significant resources to focus countries, including Uganda. Recently the President's Malaria Initiative was also unveiled to try to address the impact of malaria in certain selected African countries. Also under the rubric of the development agenda, is the African Growth and Opportunity Act, which has now been extended for an additional period and which essentially allows almost all goods from Africa to enter the United States duty free. There have been some important niche areas in which African countries have been able to market successfully their products in the United States. And then, although there are some others, I would like to conclude by mentioning specifically the Millennium Challenge Account.

This is a really an innovative new approach to providing assistance, not just in Africa but also elsewhere, although most beneficiaries so far have been African countries. But the idea of the Millennium Challenge Account is that countries that meet certain objective criteria in areas such as governing justly and investing in their own people proceed to negotiate a compact with the government of the United States and on the basis of that compact very significant resources are made available to the countries

that are successful in meeting the criteria and negotiating a compact. Under this program, there is also a provision that for countries that may not have fully satisfied all criteria for negotiating a compact, that what is known as a threshold program can be instituted that assists those countries in overcoming remaining areas in which progress needs to be made in order that they qualify for a full compact. And as I suspect most of you know, Uganda is now a beneficiary of this threshold program in order to assist it in meeting the requirements that would allow it to be eligible for a full blown compact. But the compacts involve very significant resources, often extended over a period of some years, but for example in the case of Ghana the compact was for \$540 million, in the case of Mali it was for \$460 million, I believe, so the resources and the benefits that are involved in successful negotiation of a compact program are really quite substantial. So, again, those are sort of the three broad areas that we are focused on in our African policy - Safer, Freer, Better.

Just to say a word about the Transformational Diplomacy agenda too. This is the emphasis on partnership and in this regard we are particularly interested not only in working with individual African countries with which we share common interests, but also, increasingly, African regional organizations and institutions including notably the African Union. Some of you may know, in November we nominated our first ever ambassador to the African Union and she is now in place in Addis Ababa to improve our ability to have contact and to hear from and to influence, obviously, and to present our views to the African Union. We now have also accredited in the United States an ambassador of the African Union who is a resident in Washington and who in essence reciprocates our own ambassador to the African Union by representing the interests of the African Union in the United States. So we are hoping and indeed are committed to continuing to deepen these kinds of partnerships on the African continent. I apologize for a somewhat lengthy, perhaps, introduction that covers the whole continent when I am sure you have some more specific questions you are interested in but I hope it is useful background as to how we are framing our overall approach to the continent and it is obviously within that context that our policy toward Uganda also should be seen. So perhaps with that I would be happy to take a few questions. I don't know how much time we have -- not too much -- but in terms of what may be on your mind with respect to U.S. policy toward Uganda or any other issue that is of interest to you.

Q: My name again is Osike from The New Vision. I am interested in two things: one, as a person who follows, you know, governance issues, as a person who is in charge of the African desk, I am sure you have been following events in Uganda. This has mostly been issues to do with the opposition where we have some opposition figures, you know, being arrested and there are demonstrations over rights. I wanted to get your comment if you have been following events here closely - whether you have had contact with the government, whether you have expressed your opinions on what is happening here and whether this, what is happening here, worries the U.S., you know, since Uganda is considered an icon in the region. And then on Somalia, since you are interested also in Somalia and Darfur, as you may be aware, the operations there are hampered partly by lack of funds and when the commander of the U.S. forces visited here some months ago, he told us that the U.S. had released some money to the African Union but as of yesterday we got in touch with our people and said the money has not, they haven't got the money yet. So we wanted to find out whether you have any information to that effect. How much has been released by the U.S. for these operations? Thank you.

MR. SWAN: On the first issue, really it is an issue of the democratization agenda, the governance agenda. This is a very important issue for us. It is one obviously of an array of issues about which we are in frequent dialogue with the government. These issues obviously include many of the others that I already mentioned in my earlier remarks: issues of development; issues of health, issues of conflict resolution within the country. But within the context of that array of issues, we follow very closely developments with respect to treatment of the opposition, with respect to human rights. Overall in regard to relations between the government and various opposition groups, we think it is important that all the actors and the parties here in Uganda work through the institutions of the Constitution. We know that in some areas, this is a new phenomenon, but at the same time if these institutions are going to be strengthened, if the judiciary and Parliament are going to be strengthened, then it is important that both the government and the opposition work through these institutions as they try to resolve their differences.

I think we have to bear in mind too that democratic reforms, that improvement of human rights, these are often times long-term projects for any government. We really never reach a perfect state. It is often a non-linear process as there is advancement in these areas. It is important that both sides, both the opposition and the government, not focus so much on day-to-day who is winning, who is losing, but perhaps more on building a long-term record of respect for the democratic institutions that exist here in the country. But it is an issue that we are following very closely. These are issues that we do raise regularly as part of a broader dialogue in our contact with the government and with other actors here in Uganda and will continue to do so. On Somalia--

Q: Let me just before we go to Somalia, what is your opinion on the democratization process, I mean, the multiparty operation now? What is your opinion, do you think they are moving to the right direction or, what is your assessment?

Swan: Well I think this is more an assessment that Ugandans are going to have to make themselves about the direction it is taking. Clearly there are new institutions and new means of acting that are now facing various Ugandan political actors. With the emergence of the multiparty system, I think that both the government and the opposition to some degree are grappling with how they are going to relate in these new institutions: how they can make these institutions more functional; what the relationship is going to be. And this is a work-in-progress. I think the multiparty era is now what - approximately one year old -- and clearly they are continuing to work on this. But as I said, I think that from our perspective, the focus needs to be not so much on day-to-day who is winning, who is losing but more on working through the institutions and using those institutions as a channel for resolving disputes and over time these institutions will become more effective and more viable as political actors use them to resolve their differences.

On Somalia, in this area, it is our view that the government of Uganda opted to deploy forces into Somalia because it sees the Somalia situation and its successful resolution as being a matter of its own national interest, the national interest of the Government of Uganda. The decision to deploy troops was also in response to a request by the African Union for troop contributors from throughout the continent. As I had mentioned in my earlier remarks, we see the AMISOM operation as an important component of resolution of the situation in Somalia, a component that also needs to be twinned with or paired with support for the Transitional Government and for a viable, internal political dialogue within Somalia.

In terms of our assistance, we have indeed provided support to the Government of Uganda under the rubric of its commitment to deploy as an AMISOM contingent in order to support both equipment and airlift and other transportation into Somalia. That assistance was provided primarily through a U.S. contractor. With respect to other funds that they may be seeking from other donors through the African Union, that we're not directly involved in. But in response to a request and in response to the African Union's request for external support for the deployment, we have already provided assistance to support the deployment of the Ugandan troops.

Q: About how much?

Swan: Well the overall amount that was made available was approximately \$19.6 million available for these activities.

Q. This was for Uganda?

Swan: This is AMISOM overall but a portion of that went to Uganda.

Q: I'm Edris Kiggundu from The Weekly Observer. My issue concerns Somalia again. When you look at Somalia since the Transitional Government was formed and since the U.S. ...[inaudible]... do you think you have achieved your objectives so far? Because there is a school of thought that the fighting that is going on in Somalia right now is probably worse than it was nineteen years, about fifteen years ago. And there are those people within Somalia who believe that the Islamic Courts Union in the brief period that they held power, that despite fears that they had some terrorist links, that they offered the best chance for the country to return to the normal path of peace. And that the peace that the U.S. and other countries like Uganda pledged is going to be enforced, even if it comes, it will never be permanent. It is just going to be a cosmetic situation. I don't know what your view is.

MR. SWAN: We think that the current situation provides a better opportunity for long term peace and security in Somalia than the situation in December when the Courts of the Islamic Council continued to have an active presence in Southern Somalia. If you look at the situation in late December, you had an Islamic Courts structure that was clearly, increasingly influenced by extremist elements. The election by the Council of Islamic Courts of Hassan Dahir Aweys -- who has appeared on the U.S. terrorist list since 2001, and is also designated as a terrorist by the United Nations Security Council -- was a strong signal that in fact, the extremist elements of the Courts were growing in influence. We also saw during the course of the second half of 2006 that the more radical elements of the Courts, some of them known as the Al Shabaab - the youth wing - were increasingly influential and dominating the military activities of the Courts in Southern Somalia.

The Courts also asserted irredentist claims to Somali-populated areas in neighboring countries, including obviously Kenya, Djibouti and Ethiopia. The Courts were directly threatening the Transitional Federal Government in Baidoa. So I think that we see that if we look at the record of the Courts overall, it was not a force for stability. On the contrary, it created conditions in southern Somalia that made all but inevitable a broader clash in that part of the country. So in that regard, we do think that, notwithstanding some of the recent violence - which I think it is important to remember has been largely confined to Mogadishu, other parts of Southern Sudan have been quite peaceful - that on balance, if you look at the broad trajectory of developments, that there is progress there.

With respect to the concerns you raised about the level of support for the Transitional Federal Government....

Q: Among the population, within the Somali people...

MR. SWAN: Yes. Exactly. Again, a key pillar of our policy -- the policy of the members of the International Somali Contact Group, endorsed frankly by the African Union, by the United Nations Security Council -- is very much that the Transitional Government needs to increase its efforts to widen its base of support and to reach out to groups, sectors of Somali society, that had not felt previously well represented within the Transitional Federal Government. This includes some key Mogadishu-based sub-clans; it includes some elements of the business communities. From our perspective, it also includes some religious leaders and local Courts officials, not affiliated with the Council of Islamic Courts and not affiliated obviously with its extremist wings or those linked to terrorists, but religious leaders who would represent the Islamic community but would need to be included in the process as well.

Q: Our president has been quoted variously - President Museveni - as saying that part of the problem America has failed to pacify Somalia ...[inaudible]... is that the internal workings within our continent are misunderstood by America. ...[inaudible]... we Africans, maybe we have our own ways, tried and tested ways, of going about this. Because my fear is that now if you exclude people like the Islamic Courts Union, that may not again create a permanent solution because if these people have some degree of support, don't you think they should be involved in the building of the broad-based government? Don't you think it will appear like America is trying to impose democracy...[inaudible]...?

MR. SWAN: I think that ultimately the decision as to who is included in the Transitional Government and whatever is agreed at the reconciliation conference is going to be for the Somalians to determine. But our view is that there is not a place there for extremist elements that have had terrorist links. That's our view.

Q: Okay, I'm Michael Wakabi from The East African. If I may take you back a little: Looking at your Cold War relationships with the African governments, one gets the impression that in some way, they really contributed to the entrenchments of dictatorships on the continent. And now you are engaging with the continent again, under your transformational diplomacy. What safeguards are you putting in place to ensure that your partners, people like Meles Zenawi, Yoweri Museveni and others, don't actually abuse this relationship to kind of use your partnership as endorsement for their systems?

MR. SWAN: Well, the safeguard is that we continue to track very closely the progress of these governments on their democratic reform agenda, their respect for human rights, their willingness to accept openness in their societies, their willingness to permit elections to take place and that those feature as an important part of our agenda in our dialogue with these countries. So, these remain important issues for us that we continue focus on. I think that in addition to our approach to the issue of good governance, that this is not frankly, just an American approach at this point.

One of the things that we are reassured by is that increasingly the African Union itself is putting emphasis on the need to respect democratic norms. We certainly saw in the case of the African Union's response to the coup in Mauritania and previously in the situation in Togo -- that there is a reaction in cases where there is an extra-constitutional change in power. We see also through the New Partnership for African Development some greater emphasis on governance and transparency. So we see that our interest in this is very much consistent with broader interests on the continent in safeguarding these democratic processes

Q: What leverages do you have in these situations? In the past, you could say you were cutting off military aid to Mobutu. Now what do you have to take away from these regimes today?

MR. SWAN: Well, in many cases we have a wide variety of assistance programs and other activities in these countries, but again, I think as I've already mentioned we are looking across the continent and across the board at ways in which we can have more of a partnership, in terms of working through what differences we may have over certain aspects of the agenda that we are pursuing in these countries. So, in terms of a more classic, sort of threatening withdrawal of assistance or some approach like that, we are seeking not so much to do that and more to find ways to look at where we have common interests and to try to advance the agenda together.

Q: Now, the LRA continues to be quite an issue not just for Uganda, but for the Great Lakes Region in general and at some stage, America has featured in talk by politicians. What role are you playing in resolving this conflict and what is your position on the ...[inaudible]...the ICC?

MR. SWAN: With respect to the negotiations in Juba with the LRA, in general, we very much support the African-led mediation in Juba, which also benefits obviously from the support of former president Chissano and now from the presence of other African observer countries that are represented in Juba. We think that this process needs to go forward and we endorse that process. We also think that it is important that commitments that have been made as part of the process be respected - in this case, notably, the requirement that the LRA proceed to the assembly point at Ri-Kwangba before June 30, so we are very eager to see that happen.

With respect to the ICC, clearly this is something that is going to have to be worked out between the government of Uganda and the International Criminal Court in terms of determining a way forward. The U.S. priority in this situation is for peace. We, as you know, are not signatories to the ICC charter - the Rome Charter - but we believe very strongly that there needs to be justice and accountability for those who committed abuses in northern Uganda.

Q: Maybe, just briefly, a follow-up on the last point you have said. You talked about justice and accountability. I don't know if you are privy to a local justice system here that has been in the debate about the ICC. Do you look at it, from an international perspective, as being accepted at the wider perspective? They call it "Mato Oput."

MR. SWAN: Yes. I'm somewhat familiar with it; I've been briefed on it. But again, I think that the issue of what system of accountability or justice is acceptable, is going to have to be worked out between the government of Uganda and the International Criminal Court. That's where that conversation and that judgment need to be made.

Q: I'm Peter. There was a time when things were so good down here, that the former... former... what was she called? (Laughter) Actually, it was the Secretary of State, Albright. She said that President Museveni -- she described him as one of Africa's new breed of leaders. But then all of a sudden, things began going bad. Third Term coming in and people don't believe you anymore if you describe our president as one of the new breed of African leaders. I wonder whether you still share that view.

Then, secondly, there have been criticisms against the U.S. government that you deal with these African countries in a discriminatory manner. In other words, you judge others as better than others; so while you come down hard on some, you handle others with kid gloves. Even when the incidences of human rights violations and corruption are well documented by U.S. organizations, you still don't do anything about it. I'd like you to respond to those questions. Thank you.

MR. SWAN: With respect to the description of several African leaders at the time as the new generation or new breed, this was some ten years ago and it is really not vocabulary that we are using anymore in terms of trying to characterize these leaders or others at this time. We are looking at developments in each country with respect to its own context and what sort of progress we are seeing on issues that we are tracking. At this point, we are not lumping various ones together as "this new breed," although you're absolutely right that that was the vocabulary that was being used in the mid to late 1990s.

On the criticism that we are not taking action on certain issues such as human rights issues, corruption issues and the like, again, these are issues that we track very closely, we take them very seriously, they are important considerations for us as we look at our relations here as well as with every other country in Africa, frankly, and around the world. But we are raising these issues in the context of a dialogue with the government on a broad array of questions and we continue to discuss these issues

on a regular basis with the government. But our diplomacy, we are conducting in private. We are not conducting diplomacy through the media and where we have concerns, we are raising these privately as part of our regular dialogue with the Ugandan government on this broad array of issues where we have shared interests here in the country.

Q: You must have some kind of benchmarks to measure the progress in this relationship. And taking you back to the question raised earlier, there is a lot of pessimism. Incidentally if you asked the politicians, they will tell you that things are moving from bad to worse. Using your own benchmarks to gauge the situation, where do you see the country headed?

MR. SWAN: Again, if you look back a good length of time to the mid 1980s, we have clearly seen quite dramatic progress in a host of areas in the country and the country has now embarked on something of a new experiment in the multi-party era. I think there are still some efforts to try to determine exactly how various institutions are going to function in that multiparty era and in our view, what is important is that the government, the opposition, civil society organizations and others, try to resolve their differences through those institutions as a way not only of ensuring that those differences can be resolved peacefully, but also as a way, over time, of strengthening those institutions. But clearly, as we see in any kind of democratic system, this is a process that evolves over time and it often is a non-linear process. I think we are less focused on the day-to-day ups and downs and more interested in encouraging a long-term positive trend by having the different actors here work through constitutional institutions as a way of resolving their differences peacefully.

Q: But you refer to the 80s and the 80s is more than 20 years ago - to some of us. Wouldn't it be fairer to look at the track record, from say 1986? Does it make sense any more to compare this regime to its predecessors when they have had such a long time?

MR. SWAN: Well, again I think what we focused on is looking at whether institutions are going to become more functional and are going to successfully reflect a competition of ideas among the government, opposition, civil society and other organizations through those institutions. And I think on this, the record demonstrates that in some areas we are seeing some progress. We've been quite encouraged in many respects by, for example, a somewhat greater assertiveness on the part of independents, the parliament, on the part of the judiciary and we very much like to see that sort of independence and effectiveness encouraged among these other branches of government.

Q: A follow-up. My name is Charles Odongtho. I work with the Uganda Radio Network.

MR. SWAN: Yes.

Q: As a follow-up on what he asked about. You have been in the U.S. for all your life, but you have studied the politics in Africa, the politics about Uganda. If you look specifically at our democracy, starting from independence - of course the country was a bit messed up and then with due credit, Museveni came and turned it around for some years but we now see a lot of negative publicity out there. And we all know that President Museveni who is now in power has seen off - is it now four presidents in the U.S.? Three I think. It started with Bush Sr., now there is going to be Bush Jr. Reagan, it started with Reagan, Bush Sr., Clinton - two terms, then now Bush Jr. two terms. Four presidents. And I mean, there is all this concept of think globally but act locally. I mean, how do you rate our democracy if you compare it with yours? What grade do we really have to go with? Are you comfortable that this is happening in a country that you really fund a lot?

MR. SWAN: How we compare Ugandan democracy to American democracy? I think we see that in our own democracy that there is a constant need for improvement and progress and there are a host of areas in which we see a need for continued efforts to perfect them. And this is a comment that is repeatedly made by our Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy, Human Rights and Labor, that we need to get away from the idea that somehow democracy is an end point in itself. It requires constant nurturing and care and improvement. I think at whatever stage we are in the democratic process, we need to continue trying to improve it and make it stronger. I think this is essentially the lesson that we have taken from our own history. I think it is a lesson that can usefully be applied elsewhere, that what is important is to continue working in terms of trying to improve the institutions and the functioning of those institutions within the context that exists.

Q: But with what has happened, what is now beginning to unfold in Uganda, do you think there is a problem with overstaying in power?

MR. SWAN: I think that this is an issue that Ugandans are going to have to determine based on their own political system, based on their elections, based on their Constitution as to what constitutes overstaying in power. We had a situation in the United States in the 1930s where the president remained for four terms. Subsequently, there was a decision by the people through a constitutional amendment to prevent that from happening again. But, ultimately, in a democratic system, it is the population that is going to have to make the determination on what is acceptable and what is not acceptable in terms of political action or action by any leader of the country.

PAO ALYSON GRUNDER: I think that since all the media houses have had a chance to ask a couple of questions, and it is getting late...

Q: I had wanted to ask him something to do with AIDS. I don't know if it's fine?

Q: And I have one more question about Sudan (laughter).

Q: Is it okay? Just one.

MR. SWAN: Yes...On AIDS I don't know how much I'll be able to help you

Q: What forms my question is in the course of my follow-up on issues to do with the fight against AIDS in the country and more especially with so much that is being brought in, so many initiatives, including the President Bush initiative to fight AIDS, there has been a dramatic change in design of how we fight AIDS. We had what we used to call the ABC&D method meaning Abstinence, Being Faithful, Condom Use and all that. But I think there was a change in that when the President Bush funds came in, where the focus was now removed from that and taken towards more of abstinence. And this brought in an issue, some quarrel, among the people, but I think that politically, people could not come out to say that we are not happy about this. But I think mainly this could have been driven - and this was the speculation around -- that this could have been driven by the policy of America and President Bush of not supporting condom use, but more of faithfulness and abstinence. I don't know if, because you talked about working with others as a concept and not for others. I thought that was a beautiful term that the U.S. is designing as a policy to work with Africa and the rest of the world. But I see a problem is that you try to perhaps copy and you want to paste America's policy that you think is the best that you want the world to use or in this case, maybe Uganda to use, which is not practically sustainable.

MR. SWAN: I know that I am not the best one to talk about what's happening specifically in Uganda. I do know that here and elsewhere, there is very active effort at consultation with the health community in each country in terms of developing the program. There is a consultative committee here in Uganda that also works with the PEPFAR organizers in terms of shaping the program. And of course the program includes not only prevention elements, but it also includes significant treatment elements in terms of supplying anti-retroviral treatment also to people who are already sero-positive. So, there is a wide range of elements to the program; there is a very active effort to ensure that the program in each country is developed in a consultative way with the professionals in that country. So, I'm afraid I can't really address the specific question with respect to where the emphasis may or may not be in Uganda, but I do want to stress overall that it is a very consultative process in terms of developing programs in each country according to what the health community in that country believes to be the most effective way of addressing this issue.

Q: We have seen some degree of intransigence on the part of Khartoum regarding the situation in Darfur. I was just wondering what options the U.S. can exercise.

MR. SWAN: When you talk about intransigence, I think you mean intransigence with respect to the deployment of the UN blue-hatted, peacekeeping operation in Darfur. And as I mentioned, there are two tracks to our policy - one is the political track and the second track is seeking the deployment of this peacekeeping operation. Our President, President Bush, gave a speech at the Holocaust Memorial on April 18, in which he laid out very clearly our views with respect to the situation in Sudan and

Darfur. He said that the United States wants to see the cooperation of Khartoum in the deployment of this peacekeeping operation. He said also that the U.S. is prepared to consider sanctions, particularly financial sanctions and personal sanctions, that is identifying individuals, whether within the Khartoum government or among rebel groups, that are impediments to the peace process. We are indeed prepared to impose those sanctions. However, at the request of the Secretary General of the United Nations, Ban Ki Moon, who is continuing efforts to persuade Khartoum to accept the full three-phased operations leading to a U.N. blue-hatted deployment into Darfur, that President Bush had determined that we would not proceed at this time with the imposition of sanctions, but unless there was progress in a matter of weeks, that indeed those sanctions would be imposed.

So, the U.S. position is quite clear that we have identified the sanctions that would be appropriate but that we are holding off on taking specific action at the request of the Secretary General of the UN; We've also said that at whatever time we might pursue the unilateral sanctions, we would also introduce through the UN Security Council a proposal for multilateral sanctions, UN sanctions against Khartoum. But all of this is on hold at the moment at the request of the UN Secretary General who is continuing to try and negotiate acceptance on the part of Khartoum.

Q: So a military option is completely out of the question?

MR. SWAN: The military option was not presented by President Bush when he described options that he was considering in terms of more coercive action against Khartoum.

Thank you very much, gentlemen, ladies.

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