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## Press Briefing by National Security Advisor Stephen Hadley on the President's Trip to Africa

James S. Brady Press Briefing Room

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MR. HADLEY: Good afternoon. On Friday, the President and Mrs. Bush will travel to Africa. It will be his second visit to the continent since 2001, and Mrs. Bush's fifth visit. They will travel to Benin, Tanzania, Rwanda, Ghana and Liberia. The trip will be an opportunity to demonstrate America's commitment to the people of these countries and to Africa as a whole. The trip will highlight how the United States has partnered closely with the people of Africa to address the challenges of disease, poverty and security; and how, together, we've really made remarkable progress. There's more hope in Africa and the American people can be proud that many of our innovative programs are making a real difference.

The President will stress the importance of supporting his commitment to combating HIV/AIDS, malaria and other infectious diseases. The United States is the largest contributor to the Global Fund for HIV/AIDS, Malaria and Tuberculosis, pledging more than \$3.5 billion and providing over \$2.5 billion since 2001.

On May 30, 2007, President Bush announced that he will work with Congress to double America's initial commitment and provide an additional \$30 billion to the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief for the following five years. The President is committed to working with Congress to pass reauthorizing legislation consistent with this program's successful founding principles.

The trip will demonstrate the President's strong commitment to growth and development on the African continent, a commitment shared throughout his administration. The President has partnered with African leaders to increase development assistance, support greater prosperity through increased trade and investment, and work closely with international organizations to increase international involvement, both public and private, in African development.

The trip will also be an opportunity to reaffirm the enduring commitment of the United States to bringing peace and stability to the region. President Bush's partnership with allies, regional leaders and subregional organizations has helped wind down wars in Liberia, Sierra Leone, the North-South conflict in Sudan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Angola and Burundi. The United States is also leading international efforts to help stop the genocide in Darfur.

The United States has trained over 44,000 African peacekeepers from 19 countries. The United States has trained over 80 percent of African peacekeepers that are currently deployed in African Union and United Nations peacekeeping missions, both inside and outside of Africa.

Let me go through the schedule, if I may.

On Saturday, February 16, the President and Mrs. Bush arrive in Benin and meet with President Yayi. In October 2007, with support from the Presidential Malaria Initiative, the government of Benin launched one of the largest anti-malaria campaigns, designed to reach all children under the age of five. They will discuss this project, this initiative, and the progress that it is making on the ground in Benin. The visit will also be an opportunity to discuss the Millennium Challenge Account, and the African Education Initiative, and the role these two initiatives are playing in Benin.

The President and Mrs. Bush will then travel to Tanzania and remain overnight in Dar es Salaam.

On Sunday, February 17, President Bush will meet with President Kikwete, and sign a Millennium Challenge Corporation Compact with Tanzania. President Bush launched the Millennium Challenge Account initiative as a new model of development, to support governments that commit to rule justly, invest in people and encourage economic freedom. Tanzania's compact is the largest in the Millennium Challenge Corporation's history, and it will impact nearly 5 million people. The President will also participate in a roundtable on the PEPFAR program to combat HIV/AIDS in Tanzania.

On Monday, February 18, the President and Mrs. Bush will travel to Arusha, Tanzania and tour several facilities, including a textile mill that produces insecticide-treated bed nets for the prevention of malaria, and a school and a local hospital. As a focus country for the President's Malaria Initiative, Tanzania has seen the number of malaria cases among children on the island of Zanzibar drop by 95 percent between 2005 and 2007.

To date, the Presidential Malaria Initiative has provided spraying operations that have protected nearly 170,000 residents, procured and dispersed nearly 700,000 treatments of combination therapies, and provided roughly 1.9 million bed nets for targeting particularly infants and pregnant women.

On Tuesday, February 19, the President and Mrs. Bush will travel to Rwanda, where they will pay their respects at the Kigali Memorial Center for the 1994 genocide. The President will meet with President Kagame and see U.S.-trained Rwandan troops. Rwanda was the first country to deploy peacekeepers to Darfur as part of the African Union mission in August 2004. The United States has provided nearly 7,000 Rwandan troops with training, and spent more than \$17 million to equip and transport Rwandan troops for service in Sudan.

Rwanda continues to be a strong regional voice for greater and stronger international involvement in ending the genocide in Darfur. The President and Mrs. Bush will also participate in the dedication of the new U.S. Embassy before traveling to Ghana, where they will remain overnight in Accra.

On Wednesday, February 20, President Bush will meet with President Kufuor of Ghana. The President will also visit with Peace Corps volunteers and Ghanaian entrepreneurs who have benefited from U.S.

assistance and are taking advantage of the African Growth and Opportunity Act.

Ghana is a target country for the President's International Education Initiative. Through the African Education Initiative, more than 20,000 previously untrained teachers are receiving training.

On Thursday, February 21, President and Mrs. Bush will travel to Liberia. The President will meet with President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf. He will also make remarks after visiting Liberian troops. Liberia is an emerging democracy in West Africa. The Liberian government has taken significant steps to correct past human rights deficiencies, including working to reform the justice sector, combating corruption, and promoting good governance and establishing a Truth and Reconciliation Commission to investigate and document human rights violations and war crimes committed during Liberia's civil war.

The President and Mrs. Bush will then depart Liberia en route Andrews Air Force Base. And I'll be glad to take your questions.

Q Could you talk about a subject closer to home? You've given -- the President has given Congress a three-day deadline to act on the FISA bill, and Congress usually doesn't move that fast. Some people think that he's more interested in a fight than in getting this done.

MR. HADLEY: You may remember that the Protect America Act was enacted for a six-month period, regrettably, and that period expired February 1. The President then agreed with the Congress to a 15-day extension. That time has permitted the Senate to adopt a bipartisan bill by a pretty overwhelming vote that we think provides the way forward and we think it's a very simple matter for the House in the next few days to take up that bill, and we would hope that they would adopt it.

The House is taking on other business over the next three days or so -- what can be more important than protecting this country and giving our law enforcement and intelligence officials the tools which they need to protect the country? So, you know, they've had considerable amount of time, they had one extension. The Senate has acted; it's time for the House to act and adopt that bill.

Q House leaders, though, you've given them this new information -- yes, that they were requesting -- and it's more than just four or five pages, and they need some time to go through it.

MR. HADLEY: Well, there is -- a lot of information has been provided on this issue. This is not a new issue, it's been around at least for nine months. So I think lots of time has been afforded. The Congress gave themselves six months to address this issue. They asked for more time. The President gave them an additional 15 days. The Senate has been able to act. It's time for the House to act.

Sir.

Q Then why set out a confrontational deadline?

MR. HADLEY: Sir.

Q Steve, the President spoke to the incoming AU leadership last week. He's meeting with Ban Ki-moon on Friday. He's going to meet with President --

MR. HADLEY: The President isn't setting a deadline. The Congress adopted a bill, giving themselves 15 day --

Q He's saying that he will veto, that's the deadline.

MR. HADLEY: -- giving themselves 15 days. The Senate has acted. The House ought to act.

Q It's a deadline.

MR. HADLEY: Sorry.

Q So, as I was saying, the President spoke to the incoming AU leadership by telephone. He's meeting with Ban Ki-moon on Friday, and he's meeting with President Kikwete, one of the AU leaders, while in the region. Are we on the cusp of any kind of diplomatic breakthrough with regard to Darfur?

MR. HADLEY: I think what we're seeing there is progress. It is very slow progress. I think the President would say it is too slow progress. The key there is to get this AU/U.N. force deployed. That will put 20,000 to 25,000 peacekeepers on the ground, it will assure a secure situation, and a context for the rebels to organize themselves, and the government to sit down and try and negotiate the peace.

So I think what you're going to see is continued progress. We're trying to accelerate that progress. I'm told that recently the Sudanese government negotiated a status of forces arrangement to cover the new U.N. peacekeeping force. That's a good thing. That's progress. As you know, the forces on the ground have gone from about 7,500 to about 10,000. There are additional forces coming in the next month or two, from Ethiopia and Egypt.

So this force is deploying, but very slowly. And we think the sooner that force is deployed, the sooner we can create better security, a better environment for humanitarian assistance and a better for context for people to go politically. So I don't think you're going to see any great breakthroughs. What you're going to see is continued effort to highlight this issue and put pressure in order to get this force deployed.

Q Okay. And what place do you think the conflict in Kenya is going to play on this trip, if any?

MR. HADLEY: Obviously, it's a source of great concern, and the President is going to want to talk to all of the parties, all of the -- with the leaders of all the countries he is going to visit, about it. It is -- you know, it's a great tragedy on the continent. When the President came into office, there were a good six or eight ongoing conflicts, as I outlined in my comments, and as you'll hear from -- I think, in the future. About half-dozen of those are now on the way towards resolution. That is a real accomplishment, I think, for regional leaders in Africa with international support, taking the lead and resolving some of these longstanding conflicts.

Unfortunately, what's happening in Kenya is a step backwards. What needs to happen is pretty clear. We have been very actively engaged in our diplomacy there, and supporting what Kofi Annan is doing. First step is for the parties to agree to stop the violence. Second step is to facilitate humanitarian assistance. And then third, work out a power-sharing arrangement which will allow the government to function, to ensure that security is maintained; and as part of that arrangement, talk about what is the process for ensuring a continuation of Kenyan democracy. That, obviously, means, at some point, free and fair elections.

But that is, again, something that the parties and the -- working out of the power-sharing arrangements should come to. We've been very supportive of that process, and it's what really needs to happen, and the President will discuss with the leaders he meets with, and also try to rally the continent to put pressure on the parties for that outcome.

Q He'll do that on the trip? He'll talk to the -- he'll say publicly what he hopes will happen in some of these conflict areas, Kenya and others?

MR. HADLEY: What we talked about -- and there's a lot of accomplishments in terms of those conflict areas -- I am sure that the President will be talking to all the leaders about Kenya, which is the one, of course, people are concerned about now. He'll also, of course, be talking about Darfur, and he'll also be talking about the Lake District in the Congo, and some of the progress, again, that is being made to continue moving that from a terrible conflict center to an area of peace.

Yes, sir.

Q Sir, thank you. This region in Africa is full of resources and minerals, including diamonds and all that. But poverty and terrorism is on the rise; so is the Chinese influence. What do you think President can do now to bring U.S. diplomacy to this region to be uplifted as far as poverty is concerned, and many other diseases that you've spoken?

Also, you add human (inaudible) -- great education (inaudible).

MR. HADLEY: Well, he's done a lot of things. And one of the opportunities that the trip affords is for the President to see firsthand what some of these programs, how they're functioning on the ground and the differences they are making.

I mean, the formula that he has talked about, which is at the center of his Millennium Challenge Account initiative, is if the continent is going to make progress -- and we should all be trying to support it to do so -- there needs to be a partnership between developed countries and the developing countries in Africa -- a partnership with countries whose governments are committed to ruling justly, fighting corruption, investing in their people through education and health, and are open to the power of free markets and free trade to bring prosperity.

And the President will be reviewing initiatives that over his tenure has addressed each of those things, in terms of the malaria initiative, the HIV/AIDS initiative, his support for AGOA, for free trade on the

continent, for agreements that will encourage private investment. These are all part of a program that he has really maintained consistently over the last seven years to try and bring progress and alleviation on poverty on the continent.

Q Just a quick follow, if I may, please. What role you think Libya and Mr. Ghadafi is playing, as far as bringing peace in the region -- (inaudible) other areas?

MR. HADLEY: Well, there is a role for him to play. I think that the record is a very mixed one at this point.

Q Will there be any discussion about where to base Africa Command, given that Liberia has offered to base it there?

MR. HADLEY: I'm sure that issue will come up. Just for those who don't know, AFRICOM is a command that would be established for Africa. Its concept, really, is a different command, in some ways. It would be a partnership, really, between military and civilians, and its principal focus would be to continue some of the activities that we're already doing to try and train peacekeeping forces so that countries in Africa and regional organizations in Africa can take more of a role in dealing with the conflicts and the problems on the continent.

It's an idea that has been announced, we are pursuing. It will be a different kind of command, and probably a different kind of deployment structure, with pieces of it at various locations. The concept is still being worked out. Secretary Gates talked to the President about it recently. There's a lot more work to be done. I'm sure it will be an item of discussion on the trip, but I wouldn't be looking for any announcements at this point in time.

Q Also, on something else, is the United States concerned about China's rising influence on the continent?

MR. HADLEY: We think that -- obviously the continent is rich with resources. We think those resources need to be used in a way that enhance and accelerate the development of the continent. And we think countries need to be responsible in their activities, in terms of investing and acquiring the resources in Africa, that we all ensure that these resources and our engagement with the continent is done in a responsible way to try and accelerate its development and brings its people out of poverty. We think that's a standard that all of us engaged with the continent ought to pursue.

Yes, ma'am.

Q I have a budget question, but if I could follow on Toby's question. Do you have any reason to think that China is acting irresponsibly?

MR. HADLEY: I think it is important for countries to look at Africa as not just a commercial opportunity, but as an area where we all have a public responsibility to help that continent deal with some of the biggest challenges that I think any continent faces, in terms of disease and the like.

Q Is that an implied criticism of China?

MR. HADLEY: And so what we have done and will continue to do is to urge all countries to exert and participate in a very responsible way in their activities in Africa.

Yes, ma'am.

Q Can I follow with my budget question?

MR. HADLEY: Your budget question.

Q The President has asked for \$30 billion over five years for HIV/AIDS. Advocates and Democrats and some doctors who participate in the program say that's not enough. They say that would flat-line the funding, and that \$50 billion is needed. So would you support \$50 billion? And also why were there -- there are apparently cuts in the '09 budget for peacekeeping and also for child health -- if you would address that.

MR. HADLEY: I can't address the last two. I haven't looked at them. We'll try to look at them and give you an answer.

The President made an assessment that \$30 billion, which takes the program from \$15 billion to \$30 billion -- a doubling. It also, though -- the targets of the program are prevention, treatment and care, and the \$30 billion does not just flat-line it. The \$30 billion would increase the number of persons that can be serviced in each of those categories. So the President has put forward what he thinks is a responsible way to continue this program; thinks it's been a big success, and wants to renew the program in a way that continues not only funding it, but continues to being true to the concept and principles that have made it successful.

Q Two questions on Africa. One, some Democrats are saying the President is touting it as somewhat of a victory lap on AIDS and malaria, but whereas the continent is burning -- as you said, basically Kenya, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Chad, Congo and Darfur. And if you're going to talk to some leaders about helping out, why not promote more so not just about the disease aspect of it -- why not talk about also making this more of a peace trip, as well, instead of just saying it's mostly about focusing in on AIDS and HIV?

MR. HADLEY: Well, he's done that. And there are six conflicts. And we'll give you the list: DROC is one; Burundi is one; Sierra Leone is one. You know, there has been enormous progress over the seven years in taking these conflicts and reducing them. Are they all done? No. Darfur and Sudan -- an interesting example. The North-South conflict that took over 2 million lives is resolved. There is a framework agreement that needs more implementation.

Since that agreement, we've had the problem in Rwanda. The President has called it genocide. He had provided international leadership to try and get that resolved. As I talked about earlier, there is a way forward with the U.N. peacekeeping force. So that is a case where, is it where we would like it to

be? No. Have we made some progress? Yes.

Kenya, as I said in my remarks, is a step back, and we have been very actively engaged to try and get that, in the way I described, on a track for resolution.

So I think the continent has made great progress. One of the reasons it has made great progress is that its leaders, working bilaterally and through regional organizations, have stepped up in taking responsibility. Is there more to be done? Yes. Are we actively engaged in it? Yes, both with our diplomacy, our humanitarian assistance, our training peacekeepers, which give the continent the wherewithal to manage these challenges. He will certainly be talking about them, and coordinating strategy and identifying more things that we need to be doing.

Q And on the issue of China, some African leaders are saying -- on the continent in various countries -- they're saying, look, there could be more of a win-win situation, particularly on the aspect of energy, as China is trying to help build infrastructure. And they're saying that China, to a certain extent has built more infrastructure than the U.S. has, as they're taking a lot of the oil out of there.

Why is it that there's so much of a focus on building the infrastructure, when the African governments, the African people are looking for mostly a win-win situation, so that you can take the oil and they can get money, and it could help on this side, as well?

MR. HADLEY: I think it would be very good for the African leaders to talk to the Chinese in just that way, and send that message to the Chinese, in terms of how the infrastructure is growing. Infrastructure is very important. Chinese money can be very helpful in developing Africa if it's done in the responsible way that I described. But also we know that the key to development is investments in people. That is what is really going to transform these countries in Africa, and that requires investment people in terms of health, in terms of education, in terms of opportunities, in terms of not only assistance but, increasingly, trade and investment. That's the formulation. That's what we're trying to do.

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