

McCain and Obama Speak out on Darfur and More— Summary

By John Norris, Executive Director of the Enough Action Fund; Jerry Fowler, President of the Save Darfur Coalition; and Mark Hanis, Executive Director, Genocide Intervention Network

In April, our three organizations—the Enough Action Fund, the Save Darfur Coalition and the Genocide Intervention Network—submitted identical questionnaires to the McCain and Obama campaigns asking them in very specific terms what they planned to do about the continuing crisis in the Darfur region of western Sudan. As early as 2004, the Bush Administration called the situation there genocide. Recently, the Chief Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court emphatically agreed; asking the court to issue an arrest warrant for Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir on charges of genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes.

The responses tell us a great deal about the candidate's approach not only to Darfur, but their views on the International Criminal Court, sanctions, and dealing with key states, particularly China. Both should be congratulated for the gravity with which they are approaching Darfur. Our organizations, and the millions of people that have led the movement to help Darfur, will expect the bold promises made here to be kept. With more than 300,000 dead in Darfur, and more than two million people driven from their homes, the time has come to act decisively.

On Making Darfur a Priority

John McCain: “While the United States Congress and the Bush administration have been in the forefront of denouncing the genocide for what it is and providing assistance to the victims, we need to act more dynamically to end the slaughter and secure a just and sustainable resolution to the conflict.”

Barack Obama: “I will make ending the genocide in Darfur a priority from Day One. It is a collective stain on our national and human conscience that the genocide in Sudan, now starting its sixth year, has gone on for far too long.”

- Both men express support for enforcing a no-fly zone over Darfur. McCain suggests that NATO could play a role in enforcing the no-fly zone, while Obama suggests he would “work with international partners,” including NATO, to do so.

On ensuring that the UN peacekeeping force in Darfur, or UNAMID, is effectively deployed

McCain: “The responsibility to protect civilians is one that arises out of our common humanity and no government complicit in the underlying atrocities should be allowed to set the terms whereby the international community acts to defend the most vulnerable, especially when those conditions are poorly disguised obstructions to delay the alleviation of the plight of those displaced by the violence.”

Obama: “My administration will work to ensure that UNAMID has the necessary training and equipment—especially helicopter support—to ensure the full mobility and effectiveness of UNAMID troops.”

- Both men agree, in strong terms, that the Sudanese government has been the primary obstacle to a more effective UN force. Obama calls for stiffer sanctions on Sudan, and McCain acknowledges the need for UNAMID to have sufficient airlift and aerial patrol capabilities.

With an existing 2005 North-South peace deal, the Comprehensive Peace Agreement, or CPA, in Sudan turning wobbly, and Darfur still in flames, the candidates were asked how they would promote a lasting peace for all of Sudan

McCain: “The first step to any realistic peace process for all of Sudan is ensuring that the peace accords already on the books with respect to South Sudan are honored. That includes the right of the citizens of South Sudan to determine whether or not to continue within Sudan itself. If history is any indication, Khartoum will resist any moves to secede, despite having conceded the possibility in the CPA. Consequently, the only way to avoid bloody conflict is if the South Sudanese possessed a credible deterrent, albeit not necessarily an offensive capability, against aggression, including an air defense system to protect themselves against raids like the ones which continue to take place in Darfur.”

Obama: “It is imperative that the Comprehensive Peace Agreement of 2005 be implemented in full. I will appoint a senior special envoy for all of Sudan who will have the staff and resources to fulfill the mission. One of my envoy’s top priorities will be to ensure the effective implementation of the CPA. With respect to Darfur, my administration will work with regional leaders and the international community to try to rekindle the peace process.”

- Both are sharply critical of Khartoum’s failure to fulfill the terms of the 2005 agreement. McCain also notes, “The objective is to assure not only the human security of the peoples of Darfur and South Sudan, but also their inalienable right to self-determination.” Obama places additional emphasis on the need for preventive policies to prevent conflicts before they occur.

On how to engage with China to ensure that Beijing, which is a major consumer of Sudanese oil, uses its leverage to help end the genocide in Darfur

McCain: “While my administration will seek to engage Chinese leaders in a diplomatic dialogue, it will also not be constrained by threat of a Chinese veto at the UN Security Council from proposing what is the morally right course of action in defense of human life and international law. If the People’s Republic of China blocks the alleviation of the humanitarian disaster in Sudan, then it should have to pay the price for that obstructionism, not only in the court of global public opinion, but in its relations with responsible members of the international community.”

Obama: “In Sudan, China is supporting one of the most reprehensible regimes in the world. Given the problems associated with China’s relationship with the Government of Sudan, my administration will elevate the genocide in Darfur to a top level priority in our bilateral dialogue with China. I have already urged a more constructive approach to Sudan in extensive conversations with the Chinese Ambassador to the U.S. and China’s Ambassador to the United Nations.”

- Both argue that China’s emerging role as a global power requires a greater sense of responsibility from Beijing, and that continued support for the Sudanese government undercuts China’s stature on the world stage. Obama calls for an effort to find common ground with China on promoting development in Africa.

On ensuring that the perpetrators of genocide in Darfur are brought to justice

McCain: “I support granting the ICC jurisdiction in this case, and do not believe we should allow these indictments to be flaunted. My administration would, together with our allies, introduce a new resolution reaffirming the obligatory, Chapter VII nature of the earlier resolution, backing the demand for compliance with carefully calibrated punitive measures. Most certainly there can be no question of removing Sudan from the U.S. list of state sponsors of terrorism or any other ‘normalization’ of relations between our two countries until Khartoum complies with its obligations to hand over these state-affiliated perpetrators of terror on its own people for trial.”

Obama: “The U.S. should work with our partners in Africa and Europe to ensure indicted criminals are arrested and turned over to the ICC if they travel outside of Sudan. Political and economic pressure on the Khartoum regime should be extended through sanctions and other means.”

- Both candidates agreed that the Sudanese government has offered no cooperation with the court to date.

On the role of the International Criminal Court (ICC) and efforts to ensure perpetrators of genocide and crimes against humanity are held accountable

McCain: “I believe we should work with our partners, many of whom are parties to the Rome Statute of the ICC [International Criminal Court], to ensure that the tribunal is able to carry out its mission in this case. Because the U.S. is not a member of the ICC, we are not legally obligated to bear the costs of its operations. However, as President I would voluntarily contribute to the costs of prosecuting those who have been indicted for war crimes and other violations of international human rights law in Darfur.”

Obama: “The Court has pursued charges only in cases of the most serious and systemic crimes and it is in America’s interests that these most heinous of criminals, like the perpetrators of the genocide in Darfur and the warlords in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, are held accountable. These actions are a credit to the cause of justice and deserve full American support and cooperation. Yet the Court is still young, many questions remain unanswered about the ultimate scope of its activities, and it is premature to commit the U.S. to any course of action at this time.”

On counter-terrorism cooperation between the U.S. and the Government of Sudan

McCain: “We cannot prevail in the transcendent struggle against radical Islamic extremism by sacrificing our ideals. That’s why I have consistently opposed the inhuman treatment of—much less the use of torture on—terrorist suspects who have been captured and believe that we need to close the detention facility at Guantanamo. Whatever limited intelligence sharing or other cooperation we have received from the Sudanese government cannot be allowed to sway the position we must take with respect to that regime’s responsibility for genocide and other crimes against humanity.”

Obama: “Sudan’s partnership with the CIA may have provided some useful information in the United States’ counter-terrorism’s efforts. However, we cannot subordinate our commitment to the protection of human rights or the promotion of lasting peace in Sudan. My administration will not let intelligence cooperation push the issue of genocide into the background.”

Responses by Senators John McCain and Barack Obama to Candidate Questionnaire on Darfur and More

1. Will you make ending the genocide in Darfur a priority from the first day that you take office?

McCain: As not only a challenge to our moral sensibilities, but also a potential threat to our strategic interests through its destabilization of a vast swathe across the African continent, the crisis in Darfur calls out for American leadership. While the United States Congress and the Bush administration have been in the forefront of denouncing the genocide for what it is and providing assistance to the victims, we need to act more dynamically to end the slaughter and secure a just and sustainable resolution to the conflict. From the very start my administration will work in close coordination with all responsible members of the international community, leveraging all elements of American power and influence, to help bring the humanitarian catastrophe in Darfur to an end. If the genocide in Rwanda and the ethnic cleansing in Bosnia taught us anything it is that we cannot afford to stand by and watch as innocents get slaughtered.

This is why, nearly two years ago Senator Bob Dole and I, both of us advocates of military action in Bosnia in the 1990s, proposed that the UN Security Council's demand that the regime in Khartoum end its offensive military flights and bombing raids in Darfur be backed by a no-fly zone over the region, enforced, if necessary, by NATO. As president, I would seek a Security Council resolution endorsing such a mission and work to persuade our allies to join us in its implementation. The recent bombing of civilian targets in Darfur—including a school, water works, and a market—underscore the urgent need for such action.

Obama: Yes. As president, I will make ending the genocide in Darfur a priority from Day One. It is a collective stain on our national and human conscience that the genocide in Sudan, now starting its sixth year, has gone on for far too long.

I have been one of the leading voices for ending the genocide in Darfur. As a member of the Senate Foreign Relations committee, I have met with Sudanese officials and visited refugee camps on the Chad-Sudan border to raise international awareness of the ongoing humanitarian disaster there. I also co-sponsored the Sudan Divestment Authorization Act of 2007 to make it easier for states to divest from foreign companies that help fund the genocide in Darfur. In addition, I was a cosponsor of the Darfur Peace and Accountability Act, and I have cosponsored resolutions calling on the President to work with international partners to enforce a no-fly zone in Darfur. While the U.S. has provided aid and military resources to the African Union mission in Darfur, I believe this is America's moment to lead the way toward ending this crisis.

2. The UN Security Council authorized an African Mission in Darfur (UNAMID) of 26,000 troops. Currently, the implementation of this mandate continues to be obstructed by the Government of Sudan, underfunded and underequipped by the international community, and subsequently, slow to deploy. If you were President today, what could the U.S. do to ensure the force immediately deploys and is equipped to effectively protect civilians in Darfur?

McCain: The United States has generously funded UNAMID, spending over \$100 million to assist with training and equipment to African nations willing to contribute to the mission in addition to the approximately one-quarter of the bill which we pay through UN assessments for peacekeeping. While we can and, in a McCain administration, will do more to aid in the stand-up of a force capable of protecting the people of Darfur, the international community needs recognize that the major reason why UNAMID is presently barely at one-third of the strength authorized by the UN Security Council is that the force has been hamstrung by the obstacles which the Sudanese government has been allowed to place in its way, including the requirement that the force be composed primarily of Africans when it knows well enough that the capacity of Africa militaries is not up to the task. The responsibility to protect civilians is one that arises out of our common humanity and no government complicit in the underlying atrocities, should be allowed to set the terms whereby the international community acts to defend the most vulnerable, especially when those conditions are poorly disguised obstructions to delay the alleviation of the plight of those displaced by the violence. This is nothing short of genocide in slow motion.

In addition, UNAMID needs to have the equipment necessary in order to carry out its mission. My administration will work closely with allies to assure that those sent to protect the innocent and assure the flow of assistance have the materiel—including airlift and aerial patrol capability—they need to robustly implement their mandate.

Obama: Khartoum's refusal to accept non-African forces and its delay and obstruction of the deployment of UNAMID is unacceptable. The United States and the broader international community should impose stiff penalties for this obstruction.

My administration will work with Congress and our allies in Europe and elsewhere to impose effective sanctions on the Government of Sudan so long as Sudan continues to obstruct UNAMID and attack civilians. As a further measure to protect civilians in Darfur, my administration will work with NATO to develop a plan for enforcing the U.N. ban on offensive military flights by the Government of Sudan in Darfur while ensuring the continued effective provision by non-governmental organizations of humanitarian supplies to Darfur. As president, I will also work to reduce Chinese support for the Khartoum regime. The U.S. will ensure that the international community effectively monitors the U.N. arms embargo in Darfur. My administration will work to ensure that UNAMID has the necessary training and equipment—especially helicopter support—to ensure the full mobility and effectiveness of UNAMID troops. We will also assist countries in Africa that have pledged peacekeeping troops to enhance their readiness to deploy effectively in UNAMID.

3. In Sudan, the peace process in Darfur and the peace agreement in the South are at risk of disintegration. The Darfur peace process is stuck in limbo. The rebels are divided, civil society is not part of the process, and both the rebels and Khartoum continue to carry out attacks on civilians. The Comprehensive Peace Agreement, produced in 2005 largely due to the efforts of President Bush's Administration to mobilize the leadership and diplomacy necessary, between the North and the South of Sudan is at serious risk. How, specifically, would your administration support a peace process and the implementation of lasting peace for all-Sudan?

McCain: While a peace process is important, peace—just and sustainable—should not be held hostage to process. The objective is to assure not only the human security of the peoples of Darfur and South Sudan, but also their inalienable right to self-determination. The international community acknowledged this when the UN Security Council endorsed the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) to end a conflict that had exacted a toll no less horrific than the Darfur genocide.

The Khartoum regime has repeatedly violated its international obligations with respect to the CPA—including failure to remove its forces from South Sudan, refusing to accept the final judgment of the international arbitrators of the Abyei Boundaries Commission with respect to that disputed territory, and depriving the Government of South Sudan (GOSS) of resources by cheating it of its agreed-upon share of oil revenues—with almost no consequence. This impunity must end, not only for its own sake, but because no peace accord is likely to be reached for Darfur if those involved in that conflict see that there is no political will to back up the international guarantees to the CPA.

The first step to any realistic peace process for all of Sudan is ensuring that the peace accords already on the books with respect to South Sudan are honored. That includes the right of the citizens of South Sudan to determine whether or not to continue within Sudan itself. If history is any indication, Khartoum will resist any moves to secede, despite having conceded the possibility in the CPA. Consequently, the only way to avoid bloody conflict is if the South Sudanese possessed a credible deterrent, albeit not necessarily an offensive capability, against aggression, including an air defense system to protect themselves against raids like the ones which continue to take place in Darfur. The US should take the lead in working with the UN, AU, neighboring states and other interested parties in jumpstarting a stalled peace process.

Obama: It is imperative that the Comprehensive Peace Agreement of 2005 be implemented in full. I will appoint a senior special envoy for all of Sudan who will have the staff and resources to fulfill the mission. One of my envoy's top priorities will be to ensure the effective implementation of the CPA.

With respect to Darfur, my administration will work with regional leaders and the international community to try to rekindle the peace process. Coupled with this must be a renewed effort to bring the rebel factions together into a negotiating process. Ending the genocide in Darfur through a combination of pressures on Khartoum, full deployment of UNAMID, and negotiations with all stakeholders, as well as successfully implementing the CPA, will be high priorities in my administration.

With regard to the CPA, the United States cannot take its eye off the ball, allowing implementation to stall while international attention is focused in Darfur. Both issues clearly relate to Khartoum's unwillingness to share power with all of the Sudanese people. Consistent work on both issues, simultaneously, will be far more effective than focusing on one crisis at the expense of the other. The US should also press for the unrestricted deployment of UNMIS forces in South Sudan to Abyei to help prevent the resumption of the war in that fragile region where tensions are rising.

When I am president, the United States will not dodge its responsibilities, and I will insist that other nations do not dodge theirs. The United States will lead the international community, but others must share the burden. We must invest more in our alliances, in international institutions, in peacekeeping, in foreign assistance, and in prevention.

In the future, the U.S. needs to exercise far greater foresight, maintaining energized, high-level diplomatic efforts to prevent conflict and crisis rather than merely reacting to it, often inadequately, after catastrophe has struck. As the alarming situation in Somalia today makes plain, standing by while order deteriorates and desperation takes hold is never a viable policy, even when engagement is tremendously difficult. Working to combat pervasive corruption, government-sponsored repression, and utter decay in state institutions before conflicts emerge and spiral out of control won't be easy, but it will save lives. Poverty and declining GDP per capita also substantially increase the risk of civil conflict. In Africa, as elsewhere, we must confront the economic as well as political drivers of conflict. Promoting good governance and poverty reduction are security imperatives, which deserve far greater U.S. attention and investment.

4. The National Sudanese elections agreed to in the CPA are scheduled to take place shortly after your inauguration in 2009. While you are putting a new administration together, how will you ensure that Sudan holds free and fair elections and that these occur in a timely fashion?

McCain: The 2009 elections are a critical benchmark in the lead up to the 2011 referendum to allow South Sudanese self-determination. The US government must actively support a free and fair 2009 election. Yet elections, while commendable insofar as they are free and fair, are not ends unto themselves. They must be embedded in a democratic process which is in itself credible and which includes the building of representative institutions,

enhancing good governance capacity, strengthening civil society, and fostering a culture of freedom. Unfortunately, indications are not encouraging. There is reliable evidence of manipulation by the Sudanese government during the recent national census, including credible reports that some Southern Sudanese villages near the border between the two regions being counted in the North, while others were left off the maps used for the exercise and thus went uncounted altogether. Meanwhile in Darfur, continuing violence and massive population displacements undermine the legitimacy of any poll results which might be forthcoming.

While my administration will support the election process and demand that international observers be permitted free access to monitor the polling, we must reserve judgment until the voting is concluded. The current Sudanese regime should certainly not be allowed to be the beneficiary of a set of tragic circumstances it has set in motion.

Obama: It will take a concerted diplomacy, and pressure, to ensure that these elections genuinely reflect the will of the Sudanese people. This challenge will have the attention of senior officials, including my Secretary of State. We will work assiduously to ensure that Khartoum abides by all of its commitments starting from the day we enter office. I will direct U.S. agencies to work closely with the UN as well as our partners in Europe and the AU to make sure that these elections occur as planned. This critical activity must continue, and the United States and other international actors must consistently signal that we are interested not just in elections, but in credible, free and fair elections.

Many domestic and international institutions are actively planning for the elections, including conducting a census, clarifying or passing laws regarding political parties and the conduct of the election, working on voter registration, civic education, and training of election monitors and polling agents, and confirming the election date. The U.S. is already supporting some of these efforts, and my administration will continue to do so. I will direct the State Department, USAID, and other relevant agencies to produce promptly a strategy for ensuring we are doing all we can to support the timely conduct of these elections.

The challenges to free and fair national elections in Sudan are many. I am concerned about indications that the Khartoum regime may be planning to instigate violence and instability in the run-up to elections in an attempt to disrupt or call them off. The government of Southern Sudan has also shown signs it could call for a delay because of concerns about the census and the participation in elections of large numbers of Southerners still displaced in Northern Sudan. And the conflict in Darfur raises doubts about the participation of citizens there. Under such circumstances it will take concerted diplomacy and pressure to ensure that these elections go ahead as planned and are as fair, representative, and genuinely reflective of the will of the Sudanese people as possible.

Sudan must know that the world will be watching these elections closely. The Sudanese government must be prepared to respect the will of the people of Sudan. I urge all sides to avoid violence as we get closer to the elections.

5. China is a major supporter of Sudan; it buys roughly two-thirds of Sudan's oil and has invested \$7 billion in infrastructure projects. How would you engage with China's leaders to ensure that China uses its leverage with Khartoum to help end the genocide in Darfur and promote a just peace in Sudan?

McCain: China's leaders need to understand that they cannot separate their country's legitimate aspirations for an international standing commensurate with its economic achievements of recent years from the consequences of the policies they have adopted in Sudan. They need to recognize that theirs will not be viewed by the international community as the "peaceful rise" which they claim as their goal if it is accomplished through a partnership with a regime whose hands are stained with the blood of its own citizens.

While my administration will seek to engage Chinese leaders in a diplomatic dialogue, it will also not be constrained by threat of a Chinese veto at the UN Security Council from proposing what is the morally right course of action in defense of human life and international law. If the People's Republic of China blocks the alleviation of the humanitarian disaster in Sudan, then it should have to pay the price for that obstructionism, not only in the court of global public opinion, but in its relations with responsible members of the international community. China's leaders need to understand that with power come responsibilities.

Obama: In Sudan, China is supporting one of the most reprehensible regimes in the world. Given the problems associated with China's relationship with the Government of Sudan, my administration will elevate the genocide in Darfur to a top level priority in our bilateral dialogue with China. I have already urged a more constructive approach to Sudan in extensive conversations with the Chinese Ambassador to the U.S. and China's Ambassador to the United Nations. As president, I will impress upon China's leaders that their sustained support for this and other repressive regimes (including in Burma, Iran and Zimbabwe) runs counter to the well-being of the people in those countries, to the interests of the international community, and to China's longer-term interest in becoming a global leader and responsible international actor.

China's growing influence in Africa is among the most significant developments on the continent since the end of the Cold War. China has become a major player, competing for contracts, access to resources, and political influence. China's growing presence in Africa challenges us to improve our own policies and programs, and to strengthen our support for democracy, good governance and the rule of law in Africa. At the same time, we should seek to find the common ground upon which both the U.S. and China can better contribute to Africa's development. Moreover, it would be to Africa's benefit, as well as our own, if we can develop strategies for cooperating with China in critical areas such as poverty alleviation, healthcare and protection of the environment. China's increased engagement in Africa should have provided a wake-up call to the Bush Administration.

6. A growing number of Americans from across all faiths and political backgrounds are engaged in a movement to bring an end to the crisis in Darfur, yet many still believe that the U.S. should invest only limited diplomatic and financial resources in tackling this tragedy. Others argue that the U.S. already has too much on its plate to take on Darfur. Do you believe it is in our interests to act to end this crisis? And if so, what will you do to convince the American people that it is in our interests to act?

McCain: While we must be realistic about what we can do in the world, the acknowledgment of our limitations is not an excuse to turn our back on grave violations of human rights in places like Darfur. That's why I am a realistic idealist. The atrocities visited upon the men, women, and children of that region are an assault on our common humanity, a reminder, that there is such a thing as evil in the world. From the beginnings of our history, Americans have understood that threats to human dignity anywhere diminish the dignity of us all. Thus we have repeatedly stood shoulder to shoulder with our fellow democracies to defend the universal values we share, harnessing our collective strength to advance the cause of freedom. As President, I will build on the grassroots commitment of so many Americans on Darfur by keeping attention on the "genocide in slow motion" in Darfur. The genocide in Sudan is only the latest opportunity to show that moral basis of greatness, when our power is summoned to advance not only our narrow interests, but to create a better world for all peoples. We cannot build an enduring peace based on freedom that is enjoyed exclusively by ourselves and a select group of friends.

Beyond the ethical dimensions which motivate my view of the tragedy in Darfur, there are the realist considerations which I trust the American people would understand if leaders took responsibility to lay them out for them. The fact is that the crisis in that long-suffering region of Sudan has already spilled over into Chad and the Central African Republic and threatens to involve an ever-widening circle of countries in a geopolitically sensitive subregion bridging the Middle East and Africa. We should not underestimate the damage to international security should the conflict metastasize further. Currently, we can obtain basic security for the people of Darfur at a relatively modest cost. Should things worsen restoring stability will come at a tremendous price, not just in terms of financial and other resources, but in terms of human lives and damage to the institutions of the international order.

Obama: It is manifestly in the national interest of the U.S. to halt the genocide in Darfur. It is also a moral imperative. We know from experience that turning a blind eye to massive abuses of human rights can unleash chaos that envelops entire regions, as Darfur has in Chad and CAR. The UN Security Council, with U.S. support, in 2006 endorsed "The Responsibility to Protect," accepting the principle that the international community has an obligation to act if governments fail to protect their own people from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing, and crimes against humanity. I endorse this principle.

Given the broad grass roots movement that has developed in the United States that is focused on ending genocide in Darfur, and the sanctions that Congress has imposed, I am convinced that there is a basic awareness among the American people about the need to do more to end the suffering of the Sudanese people. As president, I will work with Congress to take additional actions and devote more resources to energize U.S. efforts to end the genocide in Darfur.

7. In May 2007, the International Criminal Court (ICC) issued arrest warrants for a Sudanese government official and Janjaweed militia leader. How can the U.S. and the international community ensure that the perpetrators of genocide in Darfur are brought to justice? What can the U.S. do to bring those responsible for the atrocities in Darfur to justice?

McCain: UN Security Council Resolution 1593 (March 31, 2005), which referred the situation in Darfur to the International Criminal Court (ICC), invoked Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations which deals with threats to peace, breaches of peace, and acts of aggression, to require “the Government of Sudan and all other parties to the conflict in Darfur shall cooperate fully with and provide any necessary assistance” to the tribunal. It is clear both that the cooperation has not been forthcoming and that what is at risk is not just the people of Darfur, but the very credibility of international collective security when several individuals deemed most responsible for atrocities—including Janjaweed commander Ali Kushayb and Sudan’s humanitarian affairs minister Ahmad Harun, both of whom have been indicted by the ICC prosecutor on some 51 counts of crimes against humanity and war crimes, including persecution, rape, murder and forcible transfer, as well as Musa Hilal, a commander of the Janjaweed and advisor to Sudanese President Umar al-Bashir—remain free.

I support granting the ICC jurisdiction in this case, and do not believe we should allow these indictments to be flaunted. My administration would, together with our allies, introduce a new resolution reaffirming the obligatory, Chapter VII nature of the earlier resolution, backing the demand for compliance with carefully calibrated punitive measures. Most certainly there can be no question of removing Sudan from the U.S. list of state sponsors of terrorism or any other “normalization” of relations between our two countries until Khartoum complies with its obligations to hand over these state-affiliated perpetrators of terror on its own people for trial.

Obama: My administration would continue to cooperate with ongoing ICC investigations in Sudan. We have seen no evidence that the Khartoum regime is willing to deal seriously with those responsible for the atrocities in Darfur by initiating genuine investigations or criminal proceedings within the country against the range of perpetrators responsible for and complicit in the crimes in Darfur.

The U.S. should work with our partners in Africa and Europe to ensure indicted criminals are arrested and turned over to the ICC if they travel outside of Sudan. Political and economic pressure on the Khartoum regime should be extended through sanctions and other means.

The victims of Darfur want and deserve justice. However, history has shown that war criminals often only face justice years later. While we are cooperating with the ICC to build the case and ensure that Ahmad Harun, Ali Kushayb and others will eventually be held accountable for their actions, we need to work to protect civilians and end the violence in Darfur now.

8. In 2002, the International Criminal Court was established to create an international accountability structure intended to facilitate the prosecution of the most egregious crimes against humanity. As President, what will you do to hold perpetrators of genocide and crimes against humanity accountable? What structures do you plan to work through?

McCain: The United States supported the investigation and adjudication of the serious violations of humanitarian law and other human rights abuses which the International Commission of Inquiry found to have taken place in Darfur. I believe we should work with our partners, many of whom are parties to the Rome Statute of the ICC, to ensure that the tribunal is able to carry out its mission in this case. Because the U.S. is not a member of the ICC, we are not legally obligated to bear the costs of its operations. However, as President I would voluntarily contribute to the costs of prosecuting those who have been indicted for war crimes and other violations of international human rights law in Darfur.

Obama: Now that it is operational, we are learning more and more about how the ICC functions. The Court has pursued charges only in cases of the most serious and systemic crimes and it is in America's interests that these most heinous of criminals, like the perpetrators of the genocide in Darfur and the warlords in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, are held accountable. These actions are a credit to the cause of justice and deserve full American support and cooperation. Yet the Court is still young, many questions remain unanswered about the ultimate scope of its activities, and it is premature to commit the U.S. to any course of action at this time.

The United States has more troops deployed overseas than any other nation and those forces are bearing a disproportionate share of the burden in protecting Americans and preserving international security.

Maximum protection for our servicemen and women should come with that increased exposure. Therefore, I will consult thoroughly with our military commanders and also examine the track record of the Court before reaching a decision on whether the U.S. should become a State Party to the ICC.

In any case, we should recall that the ICC was created to facilitate the prosecution of the most egregious crimes against humanity only in those instances when individual countries and their domestic justice systems fail to deal with these crimes. Therefore, strengthening the capacity and resolve of states to address questions of justice and accountability domestically is a key aspect of crisis prevention and resolution. Effective national proceedings typically offer the best prospect for promoting recovery, entrenching the rule of law, and vindication for the victims of these heinous crimes against humanity.

9. There is growing international support for the “responsibility to protect” doctrine (R2p), which posits that when governments cannot or will not protect their own people, the international community has a responsibility to act. Thus far, the world has not demonstrated little political will to implement the doctrine, including in Darfur. What will you do to change this?

McCain: I believe the UN Charter itself gives states a responsibility to uphold and protect fundamental human rights. Yet as we have seen in Darfur—and before that, in Kosovo—the nature and composition of the organization often work against that end. Hence I have supported a new global compact, a League of Democracies, a voluntary alliance of nations characterized by shared values about the dignity of the individual and the sovereignty of the people, to defend our common interests and advance our principles. Where larger organizations fail to gather the will necessary to defend the vulnerable, smaller—but still representative groups of like-minded countries—must band together in defense of our common humanity.

Obama: The “responsibility to protect” is an important principle that was endorsed by the United States and other members of the United Nations Security Council in April 2006, and I support it. However, it is apparent that political will is lacking and much more needs to be done to implement the responsibility to protect in times of crisis. I will charge my ambassadors to the UN, NATO and the African Union to coordinate with our international partners to devise strategies and mobilize resources to make this doctrine a reality. Emphasizing the importance of effective multilateral action and shifting away from the Bush Administration’s costly contempt for international institutions can help to build a global coalition more serious about making the responsibility to protect a reality.

10. President Bush has identified a need to better focus U.S. resources to support and enhance existing U.S. initiatives that help African nations, the African Union, and the regional economic communities succeed and directed the creation of agencies such as U.S. Africa Command (AFRICOM), PEPFAR and the Millennium Challenge Corporation. Do you see the same needs? If so, how do you plan on tackling these challenges?

McCain: The many institutional initiatives of the Bush administration with respect to Africa—including the President’s Emergency Program for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), the Millennium Challenge Corporation, and the U.S. Africa Command (AFRICOM)—all testify to the increasing recognition of the continent’s significance to the United States. There remain, however, both many challenges and many opportunities.

Since 2003, PEPFAR has been largest commitment ever by any nation for an international health initiative dedicated to a single disease. I support President Bush’s call for doubling the initial commitment to PEPFAR with an additional \$30 billion appropriation over the next five years. The Millennium Challenge Corporation’s innovative funding of specific programs targeted at reducing poverty and stimulating economic growth for countries which meet objective benchmark criteria should be fully funded.

Last year I proposed the goal of eradicating malaria, the number one killer of African children under the age of five, on the continent, noting that in addition to saving millions of lives, such a campaign would do much to add luster to America’s image in the world. I reiterate that commitment today, adding that, with proper incentives, such an undertaking would also spur scientific research at home which would be an additional intellectual as well as economic stimulus.

Establishing a unified command for Africa is a useful step in better cooperating with African governments. Its emphasis needs to be on working with African and other partners to build up security capabilities and develop, in conjunction with various agencies across the U.S. government, those countries’ capacity for securing essential services, a viable market economy, rule of law, democratic institutions, and a robust civil society. While traditional “hard power” operations will also be a responsibility of AFRICOM, “soft power” instruments, including diplomatic outreach, political persuasion, and economic programs, should be part of our total national strategy of engagement alongside military preparedness and intelligence operations.

Obama: Although many advances are taking place throughout Africa, extreme poverty, the youth bulge, insufficient job opportunities, corruption, environmental distress, food insecurity and weak governance continue to fuel hopelessness and despair. This is a complex environment in which to implement effective security programs and complicates Africa’s efforts to fulfill its enormous human and resource potential. Within this context, the continent’s security issues are linked to its significant development and governance challenges. AFRICOM, the new unified command, could help to coordinate and synchronize our military activities with our other strategic objectives in Africa. Working under the foreign policy leadership of the State Department, this command could help to integrate military (especially non-lethal capabilities) with all the other elements of U.S. power and diplomacy.

We also need to better focus our assistance programs to make the most out of these programs. Today, what we call “foreign aid” is spread across over 20 government agencies, programs and initiatives, and too little of our taxpayers’ resources is getting to the problem, and no single person within our government is responsible for directing and managing what should be one of our most powerful foreign policy tools. I will double U.S. foreign assistance to \$50 billion a year by 2012.

To modernize our foreign assistance policies, tools, and operations, I will coordinate and consolidate PEPFAR, Millennium Challenge Corporation, Middle East Partnership Initiative and many foreign assistance programs currently housed in more than 20 executive agencies into a restructured, empowered and streamlined USAID. I will make sure that this agency has the highest caliber leadership and plays a central role in the formulation and implementation of critical development and related foreign policy strategies.

We cannot expect more of our foreign assistance dollars without also hiring, training, and supporting a substantial new cadre of development experts to lead our efforts. I will invest expand our Development Corps to staff a modern development agency prepared for the challenges of the 21st century. I will ensure that the State Department has the authorities and resources it requires to lead U.S. government efforts to prevent and respond to conflict. I will increase the size of the Foreign Service, fully fund the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization and create a new Office of Conflict Prevention and Resolution with senior

Ambassadors to support high-level negotiations and provide the expertise and capacity to seize opportunities or address crises as they arise. I will also build a ready reserve corps of private civilians that can participate in post-conflict, humanitarian and stabilization efforts around the globe.

Finally, I’ll integrate civilian and military capacities to promote global development and democracy by creating Mobile Development Teams (MDTs) that bring together personnel from the military, the Pentagon, the State Department, and USAID, fully integrating U.S. government efforts in counter-terror, state-building and post-conflict operations.

11. The U.S. and the Government of Sudan have been cooperating on the War on Terror and other intelligence sharing. Would such cooperation affect in any way your stance on preventing genocide and crimes against humanity?

McCain: I have repeatedly emphasized that our greatest strength as a nation is the moral attraction of our ideals. We cannot prevail in the transcendent struggle against radical Islamic extremism by sacrificing our ideals. That’s why I have consistently opposed the inhuman treatment of—much less the use of torture on—terrorist suspects who have been captured and believe that we need to close the detainment facility at Guantanamo.

Whatever limited intelligence sharing or other cooperation we have received from the Sudanese government cannot be allowed to sway the position we must take with respect to that regime's responsibility for genocide and other crimes against humanity.

Obama: No, it would not. Sudan's partnership with the CIA may have provided some useful information in the United States' counter-terrorism's efforts. However, we cannot subordinate our commitment to the protection of human rights or the promotion of lasting peace in Sudan. My administration will not let intelligence cooperation push the issue of genocide into the background.

The U.S. has not taken adequate measures to confront the genocide in Darfur. Rather than pressure the perpetrators of genocide to stop the killing, for five years we have been negotiating compromise after feckless compromise with the Khartoum regime, while it continues its campaign of atrocities. To date, we have not tried tough sanctions or even sustained diplomacy. We need to work with our allies in the EU, Africa and elsewhere to end the genocide in Darfur and support the full and robust deployment of the UN/AU force, including by providing helicopters and other logistical support. I have also supported efforts to allow people to stop investing in companies that do business with the Khartoum government which is helping fund the genocide in Darfur.