



enough

The project to end genocide and crimes against humanity

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A PROJECT OF THE CENTER FOR AMERICAN PROGRESS

February 15, 2013

President Barack Obama
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Obama,

On behalf of the Enough Project, we write to congratulate you on your reelection and on your State of the Union address. We applaud the important steps that you took during your first term to address mass atrocities and appreciate the commitment that you made during the State of the Union address to maintain pressure on the Syrian regime, to stand with citizens in the Middle East as they demand their universal rights, and to support stable transitions to democracy.

Some of the world's deadliest and most protracted conflicts, however, will require your administration's immediate attention. Please find below specific policy recommendations for Congo, the Sudans, and the Lord's Resistance Army.

The Democratic Republic of the Congo

The decades-long conflict in eastern Congo escalated in 2012 and is again crippling the region. To break the cycle of violence, we urge you to appoint a Presidential Special Envoy to support a comprehensive United Nations-led peace process, and to buttress that process by initiating a responsible investment conference on clean minerals exports from the region. Coupled with increased international investment in the region, the demilitarization of the natural resources trade is essential for peace, as well as for local and state revenues, which could lead to improved infrastructure, higher local living standards, and economic diversification in eastern Congo—all necessary components for more effective state institutions.

The unsuccessful talks between Congo and the M23 rebel group, which is supported by Rwanda and Uganda, are a clear example of the need for a broadened peace process. The United Nations-proposed 11+1 peace framework has promise as a vehicle for a comprehensive peace initiative that would include regional talks and an inclusive Congolese national dialogue to address governance issues. Both the regional process and the national dialogue will require impartial facilitation, as well as the participation of women and local civil society leaders. Influential governments must ensure that the international community plays an active role in supporting these efforts. In addition, a package of carefully chosen carrots and sticks will be needed to nudge recalcitrant actors to participate constructively.

Regarding the economic causes of this war, international consumer pressure and regulations such as the Dodd-Frank legislation on conflict minerals have made it significantly more difficult to sell the minerals mined illicitly by armed groups to fund their activities in global markets. These new regulations have also laid the groundwork for the development of a clean, certified trade. Much more must be done, however, to stop the smuggling of conflict gold and other minerals. A responsible minerals trade that is profitable for the countries in the region, benefits the people in mining communities, and provides needed resources to a reformed Congolese state, must be established

We urge you to take the following actions in 2013:

1. Appoint a Presidential Special Envoy to support a comprehensive United Nations-led peace process.
2. Work to ensure that there is a United Nations-facilitated regional peace initiative building on the 11+1 framework that addresses the political, economic and security issues fueling the ongoing war in Congo. Pressure will have to be applied to countries of the region if they attempt to obstruct the process, including imposing sanctions for violating the United Nations arms embargo and suspending bilateral and multilateral non-humanitarian aid to spoiler governments. Pressure should continue to be placed on any state found to be fueling the conflict, and individuals who have committed war crimes should be held accountable.
3. Help to develop a clean, certified minerals trade that benefits communities in eastern Congo and the Congolese state. The U.S. government should sanction documented minerals smugglers, organize a responsible investment initiative for a conflict-free minerals trade in the Great Lakes, and support regional actors to implement existing mineral monitoring and certification processes.

Sudan and South Sudan

Sudanese government brutality, characterized by militia violence and targeted attacks against civilians, has caused a large and growing humanitarian crisis. The government's brutality has helped to unify regionally and ideologically disparate Sudanese opposition parties, student groups, and civil society in their effort to change the way their country is governed. But to date, because of the ruling regime's recalcitrance, no real process is underway to address the myriad internal conflicts within Sudan. The peace process between Sudan and South Sudan has also stalled. Unless the dynamic within the Khartoum regime and at the negotiating table changes, there is little likelihood of peace in the near term in Sudan and between the Sudans.

To shift this dynamic, we urge your administration to deepen U.S. engagement with and support for civil society and opposition groups working for democratic change, while widening dialogue with factions within the ruling National Congress Party that might play a role in a potential transition to democracy.

About 3.5 million people in Sudan are facing stressed and crisis levels of food insecurity—80 percent of whom are in the conflict-affected areas of Darfur, South Kordofan, Blue Nile, and Abyei—and almost 2.4 million people have been internally displaced. The Sudanese military and government-backed militias are perpetrating gross human rights abuses, war crimes, and crimes against humanity in the Sudanese states of South Kordofan and Blue Nile, where the Sudan People's Liberation Movement-North, or SPLM-N, and other rebel forces from Darfur are engaged in an uprising against the government.

Sudan continues to stall negotiations with South Sudan on a number of issues including the final status of the Abyei area, where tensions remain high and could result in war between the two countries if allowed to fester.

In South Sudan, inter-communal violence poses a threat to the stability of the new country. The government of South Sudan must address official accountability for abuses and improve the rule of law, civilian protection, human rights, and economic and infrastructural development.

We urge you to take the following steps in 2013:

1. Deepen U.S. engagement with and support for civil society and opposition groups working for democratic change within Sudan, while widening dialogue with factions within the ruling National Congress Party that might play a role in a potential transition to democracy.

2. Immediately appoint a senior Special Envoy to Sudan and South Sudan.
3. Intensify support for the African Union and the United Nations to initiate direct political negotiations between the government of Sudan and the SPLM-N on:
 - a. A cessation of hostilities to facilitate the delivery of humanitarian aid to South Kordofan and Blue Nile and the eventual conclusion of a ceasefire agreement; and,
 - b. The modalities for a participatory, inclusive, and transparent peace process that addresses the underlying governance issues that fuel violence throughout Sudan.
4. Increase public support for the African Union High-Level Implementation Panel proposal concerning the Abyei area and urge that the proposal be used as the basis for negotiations on the area's final status.
5. Fund programs and implement policies that encourage the Government of South Sudan to address systemic causes of inter-communal violence, including a lack of the rule of law, the inability of the police and military to protect civilians, lack of accountability for human rights abuses committed by government agents, the proliferation of small arms, and a dearth of economic opportunities for youth.

The Lord's Resistance Army

The military advisors who you deployed have made a vital contribution to dismantling the Lord's Resistance Army, or LRA. Substantial challenges remain, including a lack of access to LRA safe havens and the absence of sufficiently trained and equipped forces to combat the group. Your administration's direct involvement is necessary to help to negotiate military access to safe havens in Sudan, Congo and the Central African Republic. We also urge you to work with the African Union to encourage the deployment of a special forces unit from a capable African military, which the U.S. advisors could help train, equip, and advise.

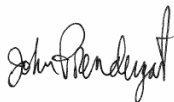
We are beginning to see progress in promoting defections from the LRA, improving intelligence gathering, and a strengthening the relationship between the United States and our partners in the region, particularly Uganda.

We urge you to take the following actions in 2013:

1. Negotiate military access to safe havens in Sudan, Congo and the Central African Republic and work with the African Union to encourage the deployment of a special forces unit from a capable African military, which the U.S. advisors could help train, equip, and advise.
2. Continue to provide intelligence support and logistical assets, including helicopters, to the African Union force.
3. Keep the U.S. military advisors deployed until they succeed in achieving the objectives of helping to arrest the LRA senior leadership, protect civilians, and promote defections. U.S. support to regional efforts aimed at ending the LRA should be seen as a long-term investment in regional security beyond the immediate goals.

We look forward to working with your administration to achieve these shared aims.

Sincerely,



John Prendergast
Founder



John Bradshaw
Executive Director