



ACTIVIST BRIEF: PRESIDENT OBAMA'S IMMEDIATE SUDAN CHALLENGE *January 22, 2009*

Within the first month of the President Obama's administration, the International Criminal Court, or ICC, is expected to issue an arrest warrant for Sudan's President, Omar al-Bashir. If the warrant is issued, President Bashir has threatened to cut off humanitarian aid and escalate the conflict. The possibility of a further deterioration of the situation on the ground represents an immediate challenge for the Obama administration. How the United States responds to Bashir's threats will factor greatly into what the Sudanese regime actually does in response to the ICC action and will also help shape what the international community is prepared to do. President Obama's response must be firm in addressing this immediate threat, but should not lose sight of the larger strategic goals that ought to be at the center of a new administration's policy: an unyielding focus on brokering a peace deal for Darfur and the implementation of the existing Comprehensive Peace Agreement, or CPA, the 2005 agreement to end the 22-year war between northern and southern Sudan.

FOCUSING ON THE LONG TERM SOLUTION

While immediate attention must be paid to the potential negative impact of the ICC arrest warrant, President Obama, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, and United States Permanent Representative to the United Nations Susan Rice must also establish and implement a holistic strategy to bring long-lasting peace to Sudan. Focusing on an [all-Sudan solution](#) and ensuring that U.S. policy shifts from *managing* Sudan's conflict to *ending* it will be important in framing the overall strategy approach.

The United States must take leadership in launching an international "peace surge" for Sudan. Leverage for bringing peace to Sudan can come from the following actions:

- Supporting for the ICC's investigation into crimes against humanity
- Enhancing international efforts to isolate the regime economically
- Expanding the arms embargo
- Making the joint United Nations/African Union peacekeeping force more effective
- Enforcing the U.N. ban on offensive military flights over Darfur

Members of the Obama administration have spoken passionately about their intention to act boldly to end the crisis in Darfur and promote international efforts toward a peaceful future in Sudan. Now they will have the chance to do so at a crucial juncture in Sudan's history.

TAKE ACTION: Call the White House today by dialing 1-800-GENOCIDE (1-800- 436-6243). Tell President Obama to appoint a special envoy as a first step in addressing the crisis in Sudan.