



One Hundred Eighteenth Congress  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Committee on Foreign Affairs  
2170 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

April 21, 2023

The Honorable Antony Blinken  
Secretary of State  
U.S. Department of State  
2201 C Street NW  
Washington, DC 20520

Dear Secretary Blinken,

As the political and security situation in Sudan deteriorates, and the first American fatality has now been confirmed in various media reports, I have grave concerns for the safety of all American citizens in Sudan, including private citizens, official U.S. government employees, and their family members. The Afghanistan Non-Combatant Evacuation Operation (NEO) in 2021 demonstrated the consequences of failing to plan adequately for worst-case scenarios, mixed messaging by the State Department, unclear chains of command, the inadequate coordination between the State Department and the Department of Defense, and the failure to coordinate with private organizations evacuating American citizens. Not wanting to repeat the mistakes of the Afghanistan evacuation, I seek clarification of several key issues necessary for a successful evacuation of American citizens in Sudan.

1. Who at the Department of State is currently in charge of evacuation planning in Sudan? As pointed out in the unclassified findings of the Department's After-Action Review, the lack of a 7<sup>th</sup> floor crisis management decisionmaker for the Afghanistan withdrawal compromised the evacuation. If an ordered withdrawal of all US Chief of Mission personnel is ultimately ordered in Sudan, either with military assistance or through commercial means, who will have overall responsibility for the safety and security of all US citizens and nationals?
2. Which nations, if any, have agreed to host American evacuees on a temporary basis and/or provide resources to assist with an American or multinational evacuation of diplomatic personnel?
3. Is the Department's Sudan Task Force already establishing or planning to establish points of contact to work directly with private non-profit organizations such as the Special Operations Association of America (SOAA) and Save Our Allies (SOA), as well as other such groups that have a proven track record of evacuating US citizens and nationals?

4. Has the Bureau of Consular Affairs (CA/ACS) developed and disseminated messaging and guidance for American citizens in Sudan?
  1. What means of communication are being used to coordinate between the Department of State and American citizens in Sudan?
  2. What instructions has the Department of State given to American citizens in Sudan?
  3. Has accountability been completed for all U.S. foreign assistance funded contractors and grantees?
  4. Can the US embassy in Khartoum house US citizens and nationals that have no alternative safe place to go? If not, what alternative locations may US citizens and nationals go to seek safety?
  5. Can the US embassy provide emergency medical services to US citizens and nationals who may not be able to safely seek care at a medical facility in Sudan due to the threat of violence?
  6. Have any of the at least 55 Amcits who, as of April 19, 2023, had contacted the Department for assistance been evacuated at the present time? If so, through what means?
  
5. In Afghanistan, the failure to clearly establish priority categories of evacuees was an impediment to proper execution. A NEO is conducted by the Department of Defense to assist in evacuating US citizens and nationals, DOD civilian personnel, and other designated persons whose lives are in danger in a foreign nation to an appropriate safe haven.
  1. In the event of a NEO in Sudan, what are the prioritized categories of potential evacuees?
  2. Is the Department of State committed to ensuring all US citizens and nationals will be evacuated from Sudan if the US Mission in Sudan evacuates with military assistance?
  3. If commercial charter flights are made available for an ordered departure, will the Department of State ensure all US citizens and nationals are able depart Sudan on the charter aircraft?
  4. Has the Department of State identified other “designated persons,” such as Third Country Nationals, locally engaged staff, or Sudanese citizens, who would be eligible for a US supported evacuation?
  
6. What decisions, if any, has the Department – in coordination with the Department of Homeland Security and other federal agencies – made regarding humanitarian parole, asylum, and refugee processing of Sudanese nationals?

Sincerely,



MICHAEL T. McCAUL  
Chairman  
House Foreign Affairs Committee