

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

March 20, 2014

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

Dear Secretary Kerry:

We welcome the Cessation of Hostilities between the Government of South Sudan and opposition forces and the diplomatic support the United States provided to the negotiations that culminated in the January 23 agreement signed in Addis Ababa. The United States has committed itself to helping mediate the crisis, and although we welcome the sustained attention the situation has received, the continued violence compels our government to pursue an even greater role in facilitating and supporting a lasting reconciliation so that this type of violence does not reoccur.

A sustainable solution to South Sudan's crisis is imperative to putting an end to the atrocities and building regional stability. We are deeply committed to lasting reconciliation so that the people of South Sudan can turn their energies toward re-building their economy, their families, and their new country. We must also ensure that those who have committed horrendous abuses against the South Sudanese people are held accountable. As such, we call on the administration to enhance the United States' support and urge you to take additional actions to end this conflict.

Moving forward, sustained high-level engagement will be essential to broker a durable peace. Mirroring U.S. engagement around the Comprehensive Peace Agreement, the United States government should strategically elevate our diplomatic presence at the talks in Ethiopia. Sustained regional and international diplomacy will be essential to mediate these complex issues. The U.S. should work with neighboring governments, particularly those of Ethiopia and Kenya, to increase leverage in support of inclusive talks. At the same time, the United States should also engage other governments in the region to ensure that their actions support a peaceful resolution of the conflict, rather than potentially encourage the warring sides to harden their stances in the negotiations. We must also work to ensure that critical stakeholders, including women and representatives of civil society, are given a place at the negotiating table and in monitoring and verification mechanisms.

USAID assistance prior to the crisis has been instrumental in facilitating communal reconciliation, the development of government institutions and accountability mechanisms, and in pressing for progress on constitutional review and related political processes in advance of the planned 2015 elections. In addition to pushing for unfettered humanitarian access to conflict zones, USAID should consider resuming its development programming in non-conflict areas, and should explore how to resume or initiate new conflict mitigation/resolution programs where

possible, even if sporadic fighting continues. As planting season approaches, United States support to food security initiatives to prevent famine will be essential, especially in areas that have not experienced violence but remain at risk for further polarization. USAID assistance should also work to increase the capacity of organizations already working at the grassroots level to collect South Sudanese views on the way forward.

Finally, we encourage the Office of Global Criminal Justice and Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor to work with the Government of South Sudan to consider the establishment of an independent hybrid or mixed special court with both international and domestic representation for South Sudan. Doing so would help hold perpetrators of grave human rights abuses accountable, while respecting South Sudanese sovereign legal authority and building indigenous capacity in the judicial sector. The United States should also consider supporting and facilitating the Commission of Inquiry that was authorized by the African Union.

It is clear that the hardest negotiations are still ahead. The United States has the power to be a transformational actor in this conflict. We know that you share our concern for the people of South Sudan. It is imperative that we use our leverage points fully and strategically to ensure an inclusive, sustainable and comprehensive peace process. We look forward to working together to implement the above recommendations to address the ongoing challenges.

Sincerely,



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Member of Congress



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Member of Congress



MICHAEL E. CAPUANO
Member of Congress



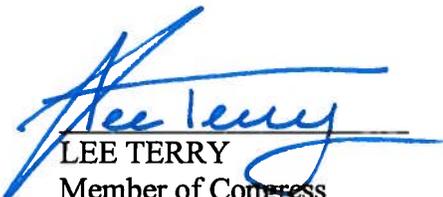
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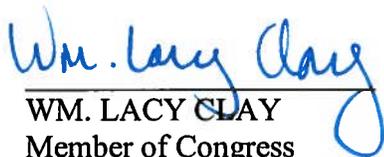
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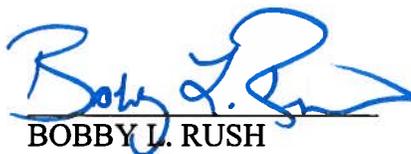
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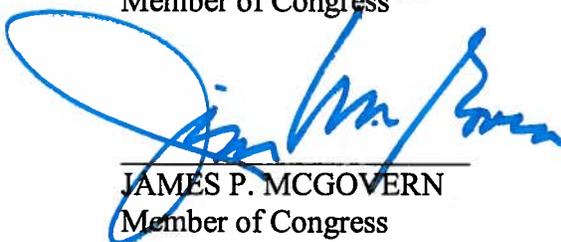
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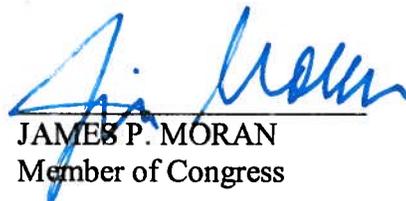
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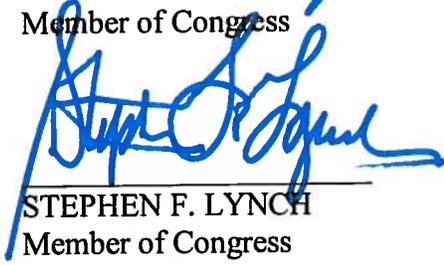
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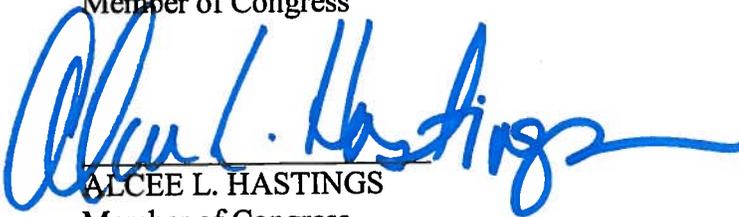
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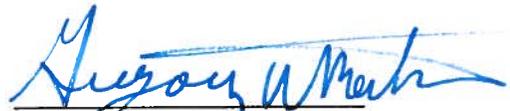
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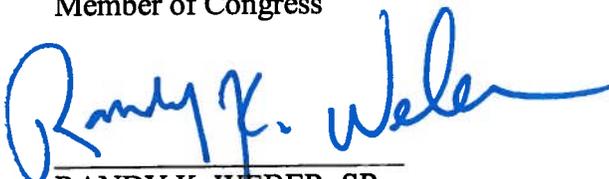
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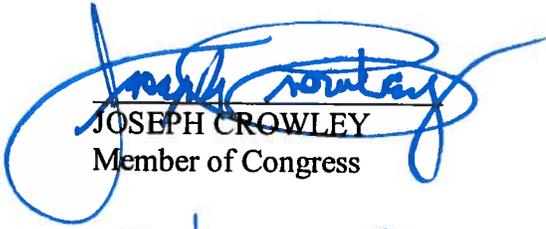
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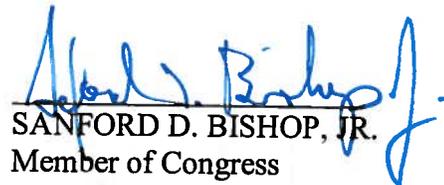

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