

## Sudan Press Conference: Statement of Rep. Frank Wolf (R-VA)

I want to thank Congresswoman Lee for her comments. I agree with and thank her for what she's done. I also want to thank the commission. I have noticed that the commission over the last several months has been much more active, and I think that's very good, because you - your credibility - you have every right and even moral obligation to speak out on these issues as anybody else in the country, because that's been the purpose of this - setting this commission up. So don't ever be reluctant and say, "Well, is this my responsibility or isn't it?"

When in doubt - because the silence, as Martin Luther King said, the silence of your friends is more devastating than anything else, and so you are the friend of people that are like this, and I think by you speaking out. So when in doubt, just let it grip and shout it out. And hold both the Congress and the administration accountable.

Thirdly, I think it's important that we have a special envoy here. There is a very positive sign: Susan Rice, who I'd worked with for a number of years. I was very pleased to see that Susan Rice will be our ambassador in New York. She was very aggressive on this issue during the Clinton administration, and I know her heart and I think I know how she feels, because I've seen public statements about it. So I think that's a very good sign. We do need a person. In this town, personnel is policy. The right person with a bad policy gets it done; the wrong person or no person with the right policy fails. A group of us had asked President Bush to appoint someone on the North-South issue, which raged for years, and he did.

He had Senator Danforth, who I take my hat off to at every time I can to thank him for having brought peace and done a great effort. And I think what the commission is saying is that there is a connection between the CPA and Darfur, and I salute Ted and John for their efforts in the good times and the bad times, who are involved in that. Now, it is important now, and I sent a letter to President-Elect Obama, asking that he have a special envoy for the Middle East. He did, he had Senator Mitchell. You could not have had a better choice. You literally could not have had a better, better choice, and that picture of Mitchell standing with the president was a

very positive sign. That message that went out - this man, this person has such credibility that when he picks up the phone, the secretary of state will take his call, or the president. And then to have Holbrooke with regard to Afghanistan and Pakistan.

Now, Brownback

and I were the first two members to go into Darfur. Barbara, it is genocide. Also, the world stood by - and I see some southern Sudanese here - the world stood by for the longest period of time and allowed what took place to the people in the South. Don Payne and others spoke out, but unfortunately, it went on for a long, long period of time - 2.1 million people killed, reports of slavery, reports of all of the other things.

Also, the failure to act really resulted, to a certain degree, in 9/11, because Osama bin Laden lived in Sudan from '91 to '96 and the world just kind of stood by and said "duh", and John Gerring and a group of them were really, in essence, fighting against a lot of this.

Now, back to this, and I want to go slowly, because maybe I'm not right, but I think I am, here. If President Obama - and God bless him - appoints Mitchell for the Middle East and Holbrooke for Afghanistan and Pakistan and doesn't appoint someone to deal with the genocide and the activities and also if the CPA collapses, Darfur will continue - I mean, Darfur will continue. And if he doesn't do that, the message that's sent is: Darfur, CPA, genocide, not very important. Or - and I don't think this is the truth - if he doesn't, then someone will say, "Well, the Middle East wasn't very important and Afghanistan and Pakistan wasn't very important, but Darfur is so important, they're - because they're going to keep this within the building and deal with it," and that doesn't make any sense, either. So I think you need a person that the president feels comfortable with, because you need that relationship, and you need a person that Secretary Clinton feels comfortable with.

But we

really do need, within the next week or two - not some long, drawn-out time over the next February, March, April, May, June, July, but soon - somebody, and it should be the same credibility for that appointment or I wouldn't even say whereby they're in the Rose Garden, the Oval Office or standing next to Secretary of State Clinton and the president.

And you can put together a team, and I commend Mitchell, he's putting together a team of people, so it isn't just him. And you have Ted Dagne, and you have Mr. Prendergast and you have Mr. Winter, and you have a team that that person, that man or woman, could almost gather around.

And I believe they have the knowledge, the understanding and the commitment - they have seen it with their own eyes - to really bring this thing to a conclusion, so that by the end of this year, the genocide in Darfur is over and the CPA is back on strength.

So I thank the commission for its recommendations, I thank the other members of Congress and John and Ted for their work, and Roger Winter and others.

We need a person soon standing between the president and the secretary whereby the word goes forth, when this person goes out throughout the region or makes any calls, whether they be to the State Department or the CIA or the Department of Energy, that they have the credibility that they speak for the president of the United States to bring this thing to a conclusion in Darfur and reinforce the CPA efforts. Thank you.