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EXECUTIVE OFFICE
OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

Note to Mr. Riza

DRAFT LETTER TO PRESIDENT AL-BASHIR

Under-Secretary-General Oshima and Ambassador Vraalsen will be visiting the Sudan next week. We thought that Mr. Oshima might carry a letter from the Secretary-General to the President of the Republic of the Sudan. Attached, please find the draft letter seeking the cooperation of the GOS in taking steps to improve the overall humanitarian operating environment and urging all parties to act without delay in pursuing an equitable end to the conflict. I have consulted with DPA on the contents of the letter and it has been cleared by Mr. Oshima before his departure yesterday afternoon.

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Stephen Johnson

Stephen Johnson ✓
Officer-in-Charge, OCHA
5 September 2001

*VG. Please consult
DPA - for clearance.
Danks*

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THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

6 September 2001

Excellency,

I greatly appreciate that you will be receiving Under-Secretary-General Oshima, the United Nations Emergency Relief Coordinator, and Ambassador Vraalsen, my Special Envoy for Humanitarian Affairs in the Sudan. Their visit comes at a particularly significant time as we strive to ensure that humanitarian assistance reaches the most vulnerable sections of the population in the most expeditious way possible. I continue to hope that opportunities for peace and reconciliation in the Sudan are earnestly seized.

Excellency, as you are aware, our ability to help those in need in the Sudan is largely dependent on the cooperation of the Government as well as the other parties to the conflict. I am therefore seeking your cooperation in taking steps to improve the overall humanitarian operating environment. I ask that you favourably consider United Nations initiatives to extend access to all affected populations, particularly in Eastern Equatoria, southern Blue Nile and the Nuba Mountains. Unfortunately, since 1998 we have been able only to conduct sporadic assessments and have not enjoyed the sustained, unconditional access to the Nuba Mountains that would allow for regular deliveries of assistance. Similarly, the recent upward trend in humanitarian flight denials is troubling and needs to be reversed.


A particular concern is the conduct of the UNICEF/WHO polio eradication campaign and other vaccination efforts. Due to the on-going hostilities and denials of access to United Nations agencies, the campaign could not be completed and, sadly, the Sudan remains on the dwindling list of countries where polio still exists. In order to properly prepare, carry out and follow up on the polio/vaccination campaigns, all parties need to mutually agree to and respect already established "Days of Tranquility", as well as additional such periods of consecutive days, each month, that humanitarian organisations can count upon for emergency interventions with full access and without the risk of hostilities.

His Excellency
Lieutenant General Omer Hassan Ahmed Al-Bashir
President of the Republic of the Sudan
Prime Minister and Commander-in-Chief
Khartoum

Excellency, whilst we earnestly try to improve the massive humanitarian programme underway in the Sudan, the only real answer is a sustainable peace. It is difficult to convince the international community to continue its generous support for the humanitarian programme when hostilities are on-going.

Excellency, the time has come to put all our efforts in to building a peaceful and prosperous Sudan, and, with this in mind, I urge you to grasp all opportunities to end the conflict.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.



Kofi A. Annan