

**Statement of Susan D. Page  
Ambassador-designate to the Republic of South Sudan  
Before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee  
October 5, 2011**

Chairman Coons, Ranking Member Isakson, and Members of the Committee: It is an honor to appear before you today as the nominee to be the first United States Ambassador to the Republic of South Sudan. I am grateful for the confidence the President and Secretary of State have shown by nominating me to this position, and for the support of Assistant Secretary for African Affairs Ambassador Johnnie Carson.

First, Mr. Chairman, let me acknowledge my immediate family members who are here today. I am truly grateful for the love and support of my husband Damien Coulibaly, and my son, Marius, who is a freshman in high school. They have endured numerous separations from me, particularly as I worked for nearly three years away from home on the mediation team to negotiate and draft what turned into the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) for Sudan. Their understanding and encouragement have meant more to me than they can possibly know. I would also like to thank my colleagues and friends who are present today. They have offered me wisdom, guidance, and friendship on a wide range of subjects -- both professional and personal -- throughout the years. I'm delighted that they could be here today. While my parents, Dr. and Mrs. Harold Page are not here in person today, they deserve much of the credit for my accomplishments and

for instilling in me a desire for service and the love of foreign cultures and international travel.

Mr. Chairman, as the newest member of the international community, and the 193rd country admitted to the United Nations, the Republic of South Sudan is home to American Embassy Juba, the newest U.S. mission in the world. If confirmed, I would be honored to lead Embassy Juba at this unique moment in history, in advancing U.S. interests with our growing team of Foreign and Civil Service personnel, military staff, and locally engaged employees. The work Embassy Juba will do in South Sudan will represent a new chapter in a deep history between the United States and the people of South Sudan.

Mr. Chairman, our main interests in South Sudan are stability, strengthening the nascent democratic state that came about through a historic self-determination referendum this past January, economic viability, and internal and regional peace and security. As you know, the United States has long been a steadfast partner to South Sudan; we are its largest bilateral donor, having providing its people more than \$10 billion in humanitarian, development, peacekeeping, and security assistance since 2005 when the CPA was signed. However, given shrinking budgets, the United States will need to work hard to expand the number of countries and organizations involved in South Sudan to ensure its long term political and economic success moving forward. As the South begins to address its capacity building and development needs, the United States will need to be

prepared to work more closely, collaboratively, and creatively with a wide range of actors to build on previous and ongoing local and international efforts to assist the Republic of South Sudan, enabling the achievement of its goals of prosperity and success for all South Sudanese regardless of ethnicity, political affiliation, or origin.

Mr. Chairman, as you know, our focus will remain on taking the necessary steps to ensure a peaceful relationship between the Republic of Sudan and the Republic of South Sudan, particularly with the unresolved status and borders of Abyei Area, and the ongoing violent conflicts in the two Sudanese states of Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile being waged between the Sudan Armed Forces (SAF) and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army-North (SPLM/A-N). The avoidance of a return to war between Sudan and South Sudan and the speedy resolution of the remaining CPA issues will remain a priority in these nations, and, if confirmed, I will work closely with colleagues at Embassy Khartoum, as well as through multilateral organizations like the African Union and the United Nations to secure a peaceful future for the citizens of South Sudan. If confirmed, Mr. Chairman, I will continue to reinforce our bilateral relationship as well as contribute to efforts promoting a stable, functioning, and peaceful South Sudan.

Mr. Chairman, South Sudan remains confronted with internal conflict and violence incited by former military commanders and political actors who seek to destabilize the south. The actions of militia groups and ethnic disputes continue to

create instability in regions of South Sudan, and could have devastating consequences for the newly formed country. We also remain concerned by the regional threat posed by the Lord's Resistance Army. The United States will need to continue to assist the Republic of South Sudan in navigating these challenges, in a manner that maximizes civilian protection and individual human rights and fundamental freedoms. To this end, the U.S. is actively engaged in supporting international partner efforts to help transform the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) into a sustainable and professional military that operates under civilian control and respects human rights. Mr. Chairman, the establishment of a strong economic and development foundation also will be critical to the long term success of South Sudan. If confirmed, I will work closely with our USAID colleagues to help the South Sudanese deliver on their promises to end corruption, provide basic services to its citizens, and accelerate the development of critical infrastructure, human capacity, investments in the agricultural sector, and strong regional economic relationships with neighboring countries and organizations. I look forward to working with our South Sudanese partners on these issues and firmly believe that inclusiveness, good governance, diversification of the economy, access to basic social services, (including adequate health care and education), as well as the development of all of the people of South Sudan, are the cornerstones of the country's future success and internal and external peace.

South Sudan is recovering from decades of war and will require continued

support and assistance to develop strong institutions. South Sudan also will receive an estimated \$4-5 billion in oil revenues annually, and will have the necessary resources to invest heavily in building strong institutions run by capable and strong individuals. South Sudan is now faced with a unique opportunity to manage its resources efficiently, ensuring effective budgeting, and taking the necessary steps to create fiscal transparency to avoid the pitfalls of corruption that beset so many resource rich nations. While the CPA timeline has ended, critical agreements must still be reached between the new country and the government of Sudan. While part of the promise of the CPA was realized by allowing the people of South Sudan to chart their own future, some of the broader goals, albeit intended for a united Sudan, should continue to apply for the new Republic of South Sudan: democratic governance; fair and equitable distribution of resources and revenue between the center and the peripheries; and the right of all people to participate in the running of the affairs of the country. The United States has been the leading donor in the area of democratic reform and good governance and, if confirmed, I will continue to make these programs a priority.

Finally, Mr. Chairman, if confirmed, my highest priority will be the protection of American citizens, including Mission personnel, living and traveling in South Sudan, and the promotion of American business interests. With only a few private Americans in-country, we will need to work hard to welcome American companies and expand opportunities and trade, by emphasizing that

South Sudan -- having emerged as an independent state, and free from the sanctions that still plague its northern neighbor, Sudan.

Currently, assignment to Mission Juba is unaccompanied, and I, like everyone else at Post, will leave my family behind. As the U.S. Embassy expands in South Sudan, the Mission will need to consider its current infrastructure and footprint as well as future needs. We will need to carefully consider both the living and working environment to ensure that the Embassy compound will provide the safest and most secure facilities available.

Mr. Chairman, if confirmed as the first U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of South Sudan, I will be drawing upon my prior experience negotiating and drafting the CPA and my time living and working in Khartoum and Juba from 2005 to 2007 while heading up the UN peacekeeping Mission's (UNMIS) Rule of Law and Corrections Advisory Unit. I also expect my current management experience as the Deputy Assistant Secretary in the Bureau of African Affairs, my previous work as a State Department legal adviser and foreign service officer, as well as my work as regional director for Southern and East Africa at the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs, will serve me well, if confirmed as U. S. Ambassador to South Sudan. If confirmed by the Senate, I look forward to working closely with the Members of this Committee, and would hope to welcome you to Juba during my tenure.

Mr. Chairman, thank you again for the honor to appear before the

Committee today. I would be happy to take any questions you may have.