# Daily Press Briefing: Discussion on Sudan

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## July 7, 2014

**Jen Psaki,** Spokesperson
**Daily Press Briefing, selections on Sudan**
**Washington, DC**

**QUESTION:** The last you had said was that the – she does have documents to travel to the U.S. Does that mean that she has documents to come here on a tourist visa? Can she apply for citizenship, asylum? Because her husband, I believe, is an American citizen. So I'm just wondering, would you allow her to live here permanently? Anything you could say about that?

**MS. PSAKI:** Well, I'm not going to get ahead of where we stand, and obviously, part of that is State Department, but part of it is DHS and other entities. So I'm not going to have a lot to update you on, and that – obviously, that process would have to play itself out, whatever the outcome is.

Where things stand now is she was released on June 26th by Sudanese police on bail. The family remains in a safe location, as has been the case all along. In order to ensure their safety, we aren't discussing their specific location.

Our view, as you mentioned, continues to be that she and her children have all the necessary documents to travel and enter the United States as soon as she is able to fulfill the Government of Sudan's exit requirements. We remain in close touch with the Sudanese foreign ministry to ensure she and her family will be able to travel as quickly as possible. But as of now, she remains in Sudan.

**QUESTION:** Well, I mean, she was for – at some point in the American Embassy in Sudan. I mean, are you treating her as the wife of an American citizen – kind of what is your particular interest in this woman other than the case – the fact that she did have a kind of horrible experience and all? It seems as if you're treating her as a quasi-American citizen.

**MS. PSAKI:** I think we're – again, I'm not going to confirm specifics of her location. I think we've all seen the details of her story and circumstances around her story. And we're taking steps to assist her, as I mentioned.

**QUESTION:** But in what capacity? I mean, are you – she's receiving this special attention because of the ordeal she went through, and this is a humanitarian gesture? Or is it because – is she being afforded some kind of assistance as the wife of an American citizen? I'm just – and when you say that she has documents to travel to the United States, are you saying that she has an American passport?

**MS. PSAKI:** I'm not going to get into details of the documents she has. She has the documents she needs to enter the United States. Obviously, there are steps that need to be taken on the other side in Sudan in order to ensure that she can.

**QUESTION:** Do you consider her an American citizen right now?

**MS. PSAKI:** Not that I'm aware of, no, Elise.

**QUESTION:** Jen, you said that she was released on bail. So is it your understanding that she's going to have to go back and go back to court and be tried on something --

**MS. PSAKI:** That was not what I was conveying.

**QUESTION:** -- for some --

**MS. PSAKI:** That was how she was released. We're obviously in close touch with the Sudanese authorities about how to make sure she has the documents needed to leave Sudan.

**QUESTION:** But does that mean that the charges that they said that she had – that those charges about her allegedly trying to travel on fake documents, that those stand? They still exist and that needs to be resolved before she can leave?

**MS. PSAKI:** Well, again, I think – they haven't been resolved, otherwise she would be able to leave, because we've provided – she has the necessary documents from our end in order to leave Sudan.

**QUESTION:** Right. But your understanding is that because she's only out on bail, she wasn't like she was just released and they said, "You can go do anything you want." She was released on bail, which implies that there's some kind of an obligation on her part to go back to the Sudanese justice system.

**MS. PSAKI:** I will check and see if that's the specific case or if that's just the legal terminology.

**QUESTION:** (Off-mike.)

**QUESTION:** She has travel documents to travel to the U.S. in what capacity? As a tourist, as a – someone with a green card with --

**MS. PSAKI:** I'm not going to get into other details of her travel documents.

**QUESTION:** Would she have to be on U.S. soil to apply for asylum?

**MS. PSAKI:** Broadly speaking, that's how people – where people would need to be.

**…**

**QUESTION:** But you're not saying that that's the case here?

**MS. PSAKI:** Well, any individual who's applying would have to be typically on U.S. soil.

**QUESTION:** But is the --

**MS. PSAKI:** The Embassy is not U.S. soil.

Go ahead.

**QUESTION:** Is this the type of issue that a special ambassador for international and religious freedom could help with in the future?

**MS. PSAKI:** Well, you know how strongly we feel about having someone in that position. And obviously, there are a range of officials at the highest levels who've been involved in this case. But obviously, having more senior officials who can advocate in cases like these is vitally important.

**QUESTION:** Is there any update --

**QUESTION:** Why don't you send Tom Malinowski? He's nearby.

**QUESTION:** Is there any update on the nomination process?

**MS. PSAKI:** I don't have any update for you, Lucas.

## June 27, 2014

**Marie Harf,** Deputy Spokesperson
**Daily Press Briefing, selections on Sudan**
**Washington, DC**

**QUESTION:** … is there any update on Meriam Ibrahim in Sudan?

**MS. HARF:** I just have a quick update, and I know we sent around one last night as well. She was released yesterday by the Sudanese police on bail. The family has been taken to a safe location. For their safety, we won't be discussing the family's location from here. We are in communication with the Sudanese foreign ministry to ensure that she and her family will be free to travel as quickly as possible. And again, we believe that she and her children have all the necessary travel documents to allow them to enter the United States.

**QUESTION:** And – okay. Well, her lawyer says that she – that they're at the embassy. You cannot --

**MS. HARF:** For safety reasons, we won't --

**QUESTION:** You can't confirm that? Okay.

**MS. HARF:** -- be commenting on specifics from here.

**QUESTION:** Okay.

## June 26, 2014

**Marie Harf,** Deputy Spokesperson
**Daily Press Briefing, selections on Sudan**
**Washington, DC**

**QUESTION:** Sudan? So the reports are that Ms. Ibrahim has been released. Do you know – do you have any details on this ?

**MS. HARF:** So before I came out --

**QUESTION:** Oh, rereleased.

**MS. HARF:** -- again, this is a very fluid situation, and things are happening every minute here, but before I came out, it was our understanding that she was still at the police station, which was where she was being held this morning D.C. time. Again, very fluid situation, so I can't confirm these reports that she has been released. We are in communication with the Sudanese foreign ministry to ensure that she and her family will be free to travel as quickly as possible. Again, she had been detained while issues related to her travel and identification documents were sorted out. And from our perspective, Meriam has all of the documents she needs to travel to and enter the United States. It's up to the Government of Sudan to allow her to exit the country. As I said, we're working with them on that right now.

**QUESTION:** Okay. "From our perspective?" Can you just – can you eliminate that and just say she has the travel – valid travel documents and --

**MS. HARF:** Again, we're working with the Government of Sudan on that.

**QUESTION:** Can you – would – are you hopeful that she'll be able to get out today?

**MS. HARF:** We're hopeful that she'll be able to get out soon. I just don't want to predict.

**QUESTION:** And would you expect her destination, when she does leave, to be the United States?

**MS. HARF:** Well, I don't have anything specific, but as I just said, we – in terms of our perspective, she has the necessary documents she needs to travel to the United States.

**QUESTION:** Does that mean she has a visa to enter the United States?

**MS. HARF:** I don't have more specifics for you on what documents – what those documents might look like.

**QUESTION:** Why not? Just out of curiosity, why not?

**MS. HARF:** Because we don’t always give out those specific details for a variety of reasons, some of which are privacy, some of which are bureaucratic. Just don’t always share those. But I gave you a new line today on travel documents.

**QUESTION:** I did notice that.

## June 25, 2014

**Marie Harf,** Deputy Spokesperson
**Daily Press Briefing, selections on Sudan**
**Washington, DC**

**QUESTION:** Yeah, on Sudan. Yesterday you told us the Sudanese Government had told you that – Ms. Ibrahim had been briefly detained but subsequently released --

**MS. HARF:** Yes.

**QUESTION:** -- and that she had not been arrested.

**MS. HARF:** Mm-hmm.

**QUESTION:** He lawyer told us that she had been arrested, that he was at the prison – that he was at the police station with her. We quote him today as saying that she's been charged with forging a South Sudanese passport or producing a forged document.

**MS. HARF:** So I do have an update for you --

**QUESTION:** Great. And --

**MS. HARF:** -- that explains the discrepancy in the statements.

**QUESTION:** And I'm particularly keen to know whether the U.S. and South Sudanese – but you may only be able to speak for the U.S. – ambassadors or envoys had been summoned by the Sudanese foreign ministry over this.

**MS. HARF:** Yeah. So midday yesterday when we talked, she had not been arrested at the airport. Subsequent to the briefing – timing is often very important here – the family was taken to a police station for further questioning, where police subsequently rearrested her on charges related to her travel documents. She has been held since then at the police station. Her family is with her. She is in the custody of the Sudanese police while the issues related to her travel – their travel documents, excuse me, are sorted out.

Embassy staff have been in frequent contact with the family, our lawyer – and it's lawyers – excuse me – and have provided needed supplies to the family while she's been in the custody of the police, so have been able to visit her and give her some things she needs. The Government of Sudan has assured us of their – the family's – safety. Obviously, that's of utmost importance to us. We will continue monitoring the situation and discussing it with them.

Finally, at the request of the Government of Sudan, our charge de affaires met today with the Sudanese foreign ministry to discuss the case. He reaffirmed our concern that the family should

be allowed to depart swiftly from Sudan, that we would work on that with them. You are right; I cannot speak for the South Sudanese Government. Let me see if I have any other updates.

And to the best of our knowledge, these charges aren't related in any way to the previous case. They are related to her travel documents. I think that's --

**QUESTION:** Do you have any --

**MS. HARF:** -- my update I have.

**QUESTION:** According to our reporting, she had – or the allegation is that she had a South Sudanese passport with a visa for the United States in it. If that were the case, you would've – the U.S. Government would've granted her a visa. So can you address whether the U.S. Government gave her a visa to come to the United States? And then secondly, if you did, did you have any concerns about the authenticity of her travel document?

**MS. HARF:** Can't comment a lot more on the specifics of her travel documents. Obviously, we're working with her and her family and the Government of Sudan to try and get everything in proper order so she can, and her family, depart swiftly.

**QUESTION:** But what about – did you give her a visa?

**MS. HARF:** We can't comment any further on the specifics of her travel documents.

**QUESTION:** But I'm not asking about her travel documents; I'm asking about a visa.

**MS. HARF:** Well, a visa is technically a travel document, Arshad, so --

**QUESTION:** Is it really? I thought a visa – a travel document referred to a passport.

**MS. HARF:** A visa to give you entry to a country, we consider that as part of a travel document colloquially when I'm answering your question. We have nothing else to say about passports, visas, anything. We'll continue working with the family and with the Government of Sudan.

**QUESTION:** I think there's a concern – the reason why this question is coming up, there's a concern that this might have been some bungled attempt to get her out of the country. Do you --

**MS. HARF:** Bungled by who?

**QUESTION:** By – I don't know. By the South Sudanese, by you guys. I don't know.

**MS. HARF:** There are processes in place for people to leave certain countries. We have been working with the family to ensure that they can swiftly depart from Sudan. We know there are a number of documents needed. We want to make sure everything's in order. We're working with them right now to see if we can help in any way.

**QUESTION:** Your understanding is that this woman is a citizen of South Sudan?

**MS. HARF:** I don't have much more to comment on in terms of her specific travel documents or citizenship or which – how she may have been attempting to leave the country.

**QUESTION:** All right. And then just given the interest that there was on this at yesterday's briefing, was there some reason why we couldn't get an update, like, off-camera? When did this information about their re-arrest come out? Was it, like, 8 o'clock at night or something?

**MS. HARF:** It was coming out overnight and this morning, actually. I think the details were still a little murky and we were trying to confirm them, quite frankly.

**QUESTION:** So – okay.

**MS. HARF:** So --

**QUESTION:** I'm not complaining. I'm just kind of curious. Did – and you're – but you're satisfied that this new account from the Sudanese authorities is correct as far as it goes?

**MS. HARF:** Well, it's not a new account; it's an updated account.

**QUESTION:** All right. Well, that's what I'm --

**MS. HARF:** What I said yesterday was the situation at the time.

**QUESTION:** Right. But you're confident that this is accurate now?

**MS. HARF:** Yes. Yes. I mean, we've met with her in the prison, or in the custody of the Sudanese police. I wouldn't refer to it as a prison. I don't have all the specifics on that.

**QUESTION:** Okay, but --

**MS. HARF:** We've met with her and given her some items she needs. And they've said they will keep them safe, and we are absolutely going to make sure they do so.

**QUESTION:** Okay. But I mean, as far as you know, as of when you got up here to the podium, what you have just --

**MS. HARF:** This is the problem with news happening while – in real time.

**QUESTION:** All right, well, no one's expecting you to know what's happened between when you got up here and – or even ten minutes before you got up here. But as far as you know, this is 100 percent accurate, as far as you know?

**MS. HARF:** Correct, yes, that she is in the custody of the Sudanese police; her family is with her; this is related to an issue with travel documents; we're trying to help work that out.

**QUESTION:** And when the charge met with the Sudanese foreign ministry, I presume he – well, I mean, what was his message to the Sudanese, or was he not there to deliver a message, he was there to – I mean, why did the Sudanese say they wanted him?

**MS. HARF:** His message was that she – well, I'd let them speak for themselves. But his message was that they need to be able to depart as swiftly as possible from Sudan and that we are happy to help in any way we can, but obviously, that's our bottom line here with the Government of Sudan, and that they should be kept safe.

**QUESTION:** Same topic?

**MS. HARF:** Yeah.

**QUESTION:** So you are still confident to make the family leaving the country, and you are satisfied with the cooperation you have with the Sudanese officials?

**MS. HARF:** Well --

**QUESTION:** You are not accusing them of kind of harassment or --

**MS. HARF:** I'm certainly not going to at this point. What we're focused on is getting her and her family swiftly out of the country – that's certainly our goal – and keeping them safe until they're able to.

**QUESTION:** When you say "her family," do you mean her U.S. citizen husband their two children?

**MS. HARF:** Yes.

**QUESTION:** What --

**QUESTION:** And to your knowledge, have they been – are they under any charges, or are they just staying with her out of solidarity?

**MS. HARF:** It's my understanding that her husband has not been arrested. Obviously, I don't think her children have been either. I do believe they're staying with her to be with her. But again, this is moving very quickly.

**QUESTION:** As the spouse of a U.S. citizen, is she eligible for what they call a safe, let's say, or re-entry travel document?

**MS. HARF:** Again, I don't have any more details to share with you about travel documents.

**QUESTION:** Regardless of – I know that you can't talk about travel documents, but – this specific here. But in general – I'm presuming; please tell me if this is correct – a U.S. consular

officer in an embassy abroad would not issue a – would not put a valid visa into a fake passport, correct?

**MS. HARF:** Correct, yes.

**QUESTION:** So you would have to --

**MS. HARF:** In general, yes, of course. We would not --

**QUESTION:** So are there exceptions to that rule?

**MS. HARF:** No.

**QUESTION:** No. So you would never – if there was --

**MS. HARF:** To put a U.S. visa into a falsified passport?

**QUESTION:** Right. To put a genuine visa into a fake passport or a --

**MS. HARF:** Nope. We don't do that.

**QUESTION:** Okay. So that – if she did have a visa, it was not obtained by some kind of subterfuge involving --

**MS. HARF:** Our consular officers do very good work all over the world --

**QUESTION:** Okay.

**MS. HARF:** -- making sure they're using the correct documents, yes.

**QUESTION:** Since Ms. Ibrahim possess now U.S. travel documents and a visa, does the United States bear responsibility for bringing her home?

**MS. HARF:** I don't think I confirmed what travel documents she has, but what I said is it's very much our position that they need to be able to depart Sudan swiftly. I don't have any more details on what their travel will look like. But we clearly care about this very deeply and have raised it at the highest levels, and are working very hard to resolve it.

## June 5, 2014

**Marie Harf,** Deputy Spokesperson
**Daily Press Briefing, selections on Sudan**
**Washington, DC**

**QUESTION:** Christian Solidarity Worldwide provided me with copies of a marriage certificate for Daniel Wani and Meriam Ibrahim and a birth certificate for Martin Wani that it got from Daniel Wani, and that I understand are the same documents Mr. Wani gave to the U.S. Embassy in Khartoum. Earlier today I emailed your office copies of these documents and said I was --

**MS. HARF:** We received your email.

**QUESTION:** -- and I was going to ask you about them.

**MS. HARF:** Uh-huh.

**QUESTION:** When Daniel Wani was trying to register his son Martin as a U.S. citizen with the U.S. Embassy in Khartoum, he provided the Embassy with the certificate of his marriage to Meriam Ibrahim. This certificate was issued by the Catholic Archdiocese of Khartoum. It indicates that Daniel and Meriam were married on December 19, 2011 at a Catholic facility in Khartoum. Their certificate was signed by a priest who presided over the marriage. It bears the stamp of the Catholic institution where the marriage took place.

**MS. HARF:** Mm-hmm.

**QUESTION:** Does the State Department have any reason to question the authenticity of this marriage certificate that Daniel Wani provided to the State Department?

**MS. HARF:** Okay, so a few points on that. The first is, obviously, I'm not going to comment on the particular scenario. But broadly speaking – because I think what you're getting at is a citizenship question, if I'm correct.

**QUESTION:** No, no, I'm asking you about the marriage certificate.

**MS. HARF:** We don't --

**QUESTION:** You still have a Privacy Act waiver, correct?

**MS. HARF:** I understand that.

**QUESTION:** Right?

**MS. HARF:** We don't adjudicate marriage certificates.

**QUESTION:** Did he provide you with the certificate?

**MS. HARF:** I'm not aware if he provided us with a certificate or not.

**QUESTION:** You do not know whether that's the case?

**MS. HARF:** I can check. I have no reason to doubt that he did, but I can check.

**QUESTION:** So did the State Department try to verify that he was married in the Catholic Church in Khartoum and that that marriage was certified by the Archdiocese of Khartoum?

**MS. HARF:** Are you trying to get at the broader question of citizenship?

**QUESTION:** No. I'm trying to find out whether the State Department ever tried to verify with the Catholic Archdiocese of Khartoum --

**MS. HARF:** Whether they were married?

**QUESTION:** -- his marriage which took place in that archdiocese.

**MS. HARF:** I can check. I don't know why – if there's a reason we would need to, but I'm not sure why the --

**QUESTION:** Because he gave it to you in an attempt to identify Martin as his son --

**MS. HARF:** To prove citizenship. That's what you're actually getting at.

**QUESTION:** No, no. Let me ask you about the birth certificate.

**MS. HARF:** I'm just trying to get to the crux of your question.

**QUESTION:** I'm trying to ask you about whether or not the State Department examined that document and whether it authenticated that document with a State --

**MS. HARF:** If there was a reason to, for a --

**QUESTION:** Yes.

**MS. HARF:** -- if there was --

**QUESTION:** Because Meriam Ibrahim is his wife.

**MS. HARF:** Take it down a notch.

**QUESTION:** She's in prison because she is a Christian.

**MS. HARF:** Yes, and we have been – very clearly raised our concerns about the case.

**QUESTION:** Let me ask you about the birth certificate.

**MS. HARF:** Uh-huh.

**QUESTION:** You have the birth certificate that I sent you, correct?

**MS. HARF:** You emailed it. I don't have it in front of me.

**QUESTION:** All right.

**MS. HARF:** You emailed it to my office.

**QUESTION:** My understanding is this is the same birth certificate that Mr. Wani gave to you. It is a birth certificate for Martin Wani. It says he was born on November 25th, 2012, which is 11 months after Martin and Ibrahim were married. It says Martin's father is Daniel Bicensio Wani, who is a Christian. It says Martin's mother is Meriam Yahia Ibrahim Ishag. It says that the date of issue for the birth certificate was January 2013, and it includes the name and signature of the Sudanese Government official that issued it.

**MS. HARF:** Mm-hmm.

**QUESTION:** Did the State Department attempt to authenticate that birth certificate with the Government of Sudan?

**MS. HARF:** So what I am telling you is I'm not going – I am not going to adjudicate citizenship claims from the podium. And if this is referring to a potential citizenship question, we will, of course – let me finish before you interrupt me, please, I saw you were ready to pounce – that there are certain requirements that must be met under United States law, which I think we can all agree is important, for parents to transmit U.S. citizenships to their children. These are very clearly outlined online. We will look at any relevant information that could play into that. But it's very clearly outlined online the requirements that must be met so that this --

**QUESTION:** I've actually – I've read the law.

**MS. HARF:** If this was part of it?

**QUESTION:** The law does not require a DNA test, correct?

**MS. HARF:** I am not going to adjudicate a citizenship case.

**QUESTION:** It requires a preponderance of evidence.

**MS. HARF:** I am not going to --

**QUESTION:** Did Mr. Wani provide you --

**MS. HARF:** Can you let me finish before you interrupt me, please? That's how we do it in this briefing room, even with Matt. (Laughter.)

**QUESTION:** Aww.

**MS. HARF:** I know. He's not here this week.

**QUESTION:** Did Mr. – this case has been quite much in the news recently. It would seem to me that you would get the facts straight. Did Mr. Wani provide you with that birth certificate for his son showing that he was born November 25th, 2012 in Sudan, and that the mother was Meriam Ibrahim? Did he provide you with that birth certificate?

**MS. HARF:** I am not going to comment on the specifics of any adjudication that's happening in this case. I am just not going to comment on what's happening on the ground.

**QUESTION:** And is it a fact that the State Department, having that birth certificate, did not need a DNA test, but it chose instead to demand one as a matter of discretion? Is that true or false?

**MS. HARF:** There are certain – as I just said, I am not going to adjudicate the details of this citizenship. What I have said is there are certain requirements that must be met for parents to transmit U.S. citizenship to their children. This can only be done after a consular officer abroad examines the evidence in the application to transmit citizenship. Obviously, there must be a biological relationship. U.S. regulation authorizes the Department to request whatever additional information it may need to establish the U.S. citizenship of a child born abroad to a U.S. citizen parent or parents.

**QUESTION:** Authorizes, but doesn't require.

**MS. HARF:** Again, I --

**QUESTION:** Is it not a fact that the State Department was not required to demand a DNA test, especially after it had the birth certificate?

**MS. HARF:** I think I just made very clear that our consular officers have a responsibility to look at any information they deem necessary to determine U.S. citizenship, which I think we would all argue is important.

**QUESTION:** So as of this moment, the State Department is not denying the authenticity of the documents that Mr. Wani provided to the State Department?

**MS. HARF:** I am not commenting on the authenticity one way or the other.

**QUESTION:** You won't deny it?

**MS. HARF:** I am not commenting on it --

**QUESTION:** Has – and you won't say whether the State Department has even attempted --

**MS. HARF:** -- one way or the other.

**QUESTION:** -- to authenticate those documents.

**MS. HARF:** I am not going to get into the specifics of the investigation that's going on on the ground.

**QUESTION:** And he signed a Privacy Act waiver so you may, but you're choosing not to.

**MS. HARF:** Someone signing a Privacy Act waiver does not necessarily mean that we discuss all the details of their case. If you were overseas and we were adjudicating something that was private to you, I think that people recognize, quite frankly, that there are some details we don't discuss.

**QUESTION:** Do you think Mr. Wani would be upset if he recognized his son as a U.S. citizen and accepted that birth certificate?

**MS. HARF:** We're not going to get into the details of the adjudication process. And I think I've exhausted this topic.

**…**

**QUESTION:** Do you consider Meriam's children in jail with her to be U.S. citizens?

**MS. HARF:** As I just said, I'm not going to adjudicate citizenship claims from the podium.

**QUESTION:** Do you in any way challenge the validity of his Catholic marriage to Meriam Ibrahim?

**MS. HARF:** I just said I am not going to --

**QUESTION:** Does the State Department recognize his Catholic --

**MS. HARF:** Did you forget – I'm not going to answer any more questions if you interrupt me.

**QUESTION:** Do you in any way challenge the validity of his Catholic marriage?

**MS. HARF:** We're moving on. Samir.

**QUESTION:** I have --

**QUESTION:** Do you have a readout of --

**QUESTION:** I have one question on this --

**MS. HARF:** Okay, Jo.

**QUESTION:** -- which is about the little girl who was born a couple of weeks ago to Meriam.

**MS. HARF:** Yes.

**QUESTION:** How is she going to get her birth certificate?

**MS. HARF:** Again, I – we're looking at the case. We're concerned about it. We have not been more clear that we're concerned about it, and it's very complicated. I am not going to get into the process of how we're adjudicating it on the ground.

**QUESTION:** And just – when was the last time that consular officials managed to see Mr. Wani? You said last week that he'd seen them on Thursday, I believe.

**MS. HARF:** Mm-hmm.

**QUESTION:** Have you – has he been in contact or have they been in contact with --

**MS. HARF:** Most recently on June 2nd, with Mr. Wani.

**QUESTION:** Just one final --

**MS. HARF:** Uh-huh.

**QUESTION:** Is the State Department making any efforts at least to free the children from jail?

**MS. HARF:** Again, we've said very clearly that we are in contact with her lawyers, particularly. She has full legal representation. We continue to call on the Government of Sudan to do a number of things, including respecting the right of freedom of religion.

**QUESTION:** Would this be something that a potential nominee or the ambassador-at-large for international freedom could help with?

**MS. HARF:** Of course they could help with it, but there are a number of people working on this very hard every single day.

**QUESTION:** Is there any update on the nomination --

**MS. HARF:** No update on that.

## June 2, 2014

**Jen Psaki,** Spokesperson
**Daily Press Briefing, selections on Sudan**
**Washington, DC**

**QUESTION:** British Prime Minister David Cameron was quoted in The Times of London on Saturday saying, quote, "The way she is being treated is barbaric and has no place in today's world. Religious freedom is an absolute, fundamental human right. I urge the Government of Sudan to overturn the sentence and immediately provide appropriate support and medical care for her and her children," unquote.

Today in The Times, Meriam Ibrahim's Sudanese lawyer said that President Obama has to do something like Prime Minister Cameron did.

And I know the State Department has made statements about this. The White House has made statements. What I'm interested in is: Has Secretary Kerry personally spoken out about the plight of this wife of an American citizen and these children of an American citizen?

**MS. PSAKI:** Well, I've spoken with Secretary Kerry about this issue. It is one he is as concerned as others not only in our Administration but others who have spoken out against the world – around the world. And we have spoken out very strongly here about our concerns about this specific case.

**QUESTION:** He's spoken to you about it, but he hasn't publicly personally made a statement expressing his outrage that what's being done to this wife and children of a U.S. citizen in Sudan.

**MS. PSAKI:** Well, I can assure that this is an issue he is gravely concerned about, and that's why we've spoken out about it. I do have an update for all of you on this particular case.

We do have Privacy Act waiver for Mr. Wani at this time, who I can confirm is a U.S. citizen, as has been reported. We have been engaged with him since June of 2013, so for the last year, and we've been in regular contact with him throughout the trial. Embassy officials most recently met with him on June 2nd, so that is today. And one of our top priorities, as all of you know, is the protection of U.S. citizens overseas, and our continued engagement with him and efforts to assist him as a U.S. citizen are indicative of that commitment.

**QUESTION:** Now that we publicly know that he's a U.S. citizen, these children – this one-week-old little girl and this 20-month-old boy – these are the children of a U.S. citizen that's being held by the Government of Sudan?

**MS. PSAKI:** Well, without commenting on this particular scenario, I can say that certain requirements must be met for parents to transmit U.S. citizenship to their children, and I can – I would point you to our website and like at the INA requirements for what is required in that case.

**QUESTION:** Well, let me ask you about the INA. Each year the State Department, along with HHS and DHS, puts out a report on proposed refugee admissions to the United States, and page 14 in the most recent report for fiscal 2014 says the following, quote, "Section 207c of the Immigration and Nationality Act grants the Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security authority to admit at his or her discretion any refugee who is not firmly resettled in a third country, who is determined to be of special humanitarian concern, and who is admissible to the United States," unquote. Has Secretary Kerry recommended to Secretary Johnson that he admit Meriam Ibrahim and her children, this wife and children of a U.S. citizen, to the United States as refugees if the Sudanese will let them go?

**MS. PSAKI:** Well, let me outline some requirements that you may not be aware of may not have decided to read there. Applicants for asylum must be physically present in the United States, although applicants for refugee status may be located outside of the United States. They generally must be outside of their country of origin and refer to the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program by the UN High Commissioner for Refugees. Refugee determinations are made on a case-by-case basis by the Department of Homeland Security.

**QUESTION:** There's a – you said "generally," which is what it says. It says "generally." The law actually says – Section 207c of the INA actually says that the Homeland Security Secretary has the discretion to admit any person who is not firmly resettled in a third country.

**MS. PSAKI:** Well, I would point you to the Department of Homeland Security.

**QUESTION:** So are you --

**MS. PSAKI:** I think we have to move on. I'm sorry.

…

**QUESTION:** Sorry. One point I wanted to clarify was in the British press, Mr. Wani was quoted as saying that the State Department had asked for DNA testing of the children. Is that correct?

**MS. PSAKI:** Well, there are certain requirements that I just referenced to you that have long been the case, and they're available on – are on the INA website. To transmit U.S. citizenship to a child born abroad there must be, among other requirements, a biological relationship between the child and a U.S. citizen, a parent or parents. U.S. regulation authorizes the Department to request whatever additional evidence it may need to establish the U.S. citizenship. Genetic testing is a useful tool for verifying a biological relationship. Again, this is all available on our website and is standard operating procedure in --

**QUESTION:** So the --

**QUESTION:** So do you say that --

**QUESTION:** Are you saying that those requirements have not been met, is what I see you suggesting?

**MS. PSAKI:** We don't have all the information we would need in this case.

**QUESTION:** The State Department is contesting that these two children are Mr. Wani's children?

**MS. PSAKI:** We're not contesting anything. We have standard requirements.

**QUESTION:** You're forcing him to prove it with DNA?

**MS. PSAKI:** We have standard requirements across the --

**QUESTION:** Can we --

**QUESTION:** Can I ask – well, hold on a second. Do you know if you have made an effort with the Sudanese to get the kind of genetic information that you would need from the infant and child?

**MS. PSAKI:** I don't have any other details I can share on that case.

**QUESTION:** Is that because of the Privacy Act consideration, or – because now that you have it --

**MS. PSAKI:** Mm-hmm.

**QUESTION:** -- I'm presuming that you're able to speak to – has the – to all aspects of the case, at least as it involves the father. Has the father offered to provide the genetic – whatever it is that you would need to make a determination that is required by the --

**MS. PSAKI:** All I'm going to say is we don't have the information needed in this case.

**QUESTION:** Does that mean – hold on a second. Does that mean that information has been provided and it proved negative, or does that mean that you just don't have it?

**MS. PSAKI:** I don't have any other details I can share.

**QUESTION:** Let me ask you one more follow-up to that.

**MS. PSAKI:** Okay. Last one. Go ahead.

**QUESTION:** Okay. All right. Secretary Johnson testified in a House committee last week that Congressman Trent Franks asked him if he was personally familiar with the case of Meriam Ibrahim. He said that, in general terms, "I think." Those were his exact words, "I think," which means he doesn't know.

**MS. PSAKI:** I would point you to the Department of Homeland Security.

**QUESTION:** No, no. What I want to ask you is about Secretary of State Kerry. Has Secretary of State Kerry had any communications with Secretary Johnson about the plight of this wife of a U.S. citizen and these children of a U.S. citizen who have been in prison in Sudan because they're Christians, yes or no?

**MS. PSAKI:** Again, we would not have spoken out as strongly as we have about this horrific case if there weren't concerns from the very top. I'm not going to outline it further.

## May 30, 2014

**Jen Psaki,** Spokesperson
**Daily Press Briefing, selections on Sudan**
**Washington, DC**

**QUESTION:** On the case in Sudan of the woman in jail and possibly being executed for refusing to convert, is there any – do you have anything further on that, anything further about whether the U.S. will take any action against Sudan?

**MS. PSAKI:** I have nothing new to add to what I said yesterday.

## May 29, 2014

**Jen Psaki,** Spokesperson
**Daily Press Briefing, selections on Sudan**
**Washington, DC**

**QUESTION:** Yes. I'd like to ask about Sudan and this case of the woman in jail for refusing to convert to Islam. Her husband, Daniel Wani, did an interview in which he said that the State Department – he's furious with the State Department. He said that the State Department has not helped him, that – told him that they would not help the family because this involved a criminal case of a non-U.S. citizen. Is that true?

**MS. PSAKI:** Well, let me first say, as you all know, we still don't have a Privacy Act waiver in this case. We have raised this issue. And obviously that wouldn't be applicable to Meriam, because she's not a U.S. citizen and there's no suspicion she is. We have – our consular services has done everything that they would in any normal case. I can't go into further detail beyond that.

I will also add – and I know somebody asked this question the other day – at what level has this been raised. Under Secretary Sherman called in the charge of the Embassy of Sudan to discuss the case just last week. In addition to her meeting, Special Envoy Donald Booth this week spoke with the Sudanese foreign minister to convey our grave concerns about this case. Special Envoy Booth also called upon the Government of Sudan to respect the right to freedom of religion, including one's rights to change one's faiths or beliefs. We have – U.S. Embassy officials have attended public hearings to date and will closely monitor the appeals process in Khartoum, which we understand can be quite lengthy.

**QUESTION:** Well, what are the levers of pressure that the U.S. has here? I mean, the U.S. has given Sudan hundreds of millions of dollars over the last many years. Is there any consideration of withholding U.S. aid, considering all of your work on religious freedom and that the U.S. holds itself up as a moral authority on religious freedom?

**MS. PSAKI:** Well, it's not just the United States. Obviously a range of countries have put a significant amount of public pressure on in this case. I'm not aware of that option being considered, but we will consider – continue to press through every channel we can our concerns about this case.

**QUESTION:** Well, why not? I mean, do you think that the taxpayers would want their money being kind of subsidized for a government that is going to execute a woman for refusing to convert --

**MS. PSAKI:** Well, clearly, Elise, we're concerned about this horrific case, and we've expressed that many, many, many times. There are a range of criteria that are looked at for any consideration on that level, and I'm not aware of that being under consideration at this time.

**QUESTION:** I understand. But on a general rule, I mean in terms of your policies on religious freedom, what are the consequences for a country that has the death penalty for a violation of religion?

**MS. PSAKI:** Well, again, I don't want to speculate on that. You know how strongly we feel about religious freedom. We'll continue to press for seeing the process --

**QUESTION:** Well, I know that you say you feel strongly about it, but I mean, what is the policy? I mean, are there sanctions that are applicable in terms of violation of human rights and specifically on the death penalty?

**MS. PSAKI:** Obviously, there are a range of criteria that are looked to in any case. I have nothing further to speculate on this point.

**QUESTION:** Well, would you say that that's being considered – any type of punitive action?

**MS. PSAKI:** Not that I'm aware of, no.

**QUESTION:** Jen, do you – actually, do you have the aid figure? Do you know --

**MS. PSAKI:** The aid figure? I do not have that. I'm happy to get that to all of you.

**QUESTION:** Do you know if it is, in fact, hundreds of million dollars?

**MS. PSAKI:** I don't know. I don't have the specific --

**QUESTION:** Sudan is still a state sponsor of terrorism, so --

**QUESTION:** Yeah, no, but last year they spent about --

**MS. PSAKI:** I don't

**QUESTION:** -- a hundred and something million dollars.

**MS. PSAKI:** Mm-hmm.

**QUESTION:** So the – would you say or can you say if your efforts on behalf of this woman, who is not an American citizen, is greater than it would be in a normal – in a case where – I want to retract the word "normal" – in a case where it was a U.S. citizen? Or are you doing the same thing you would do --

**MS. PSAKI:** Greater than for her?

**QUESTION:** Well, she's married to an American citizen, right? Or has that not been established?

**QUESTION:** Is that not applicable?

**MS. PSAKI:** We --

**QUESTION:** So --

**QUESTION:** Does that not matter?

**MS. PSAKI:** Broadly speaking, and we can't – you know why we couldn't speak to it --

**QUESTION:** I just – are you doing the same thing that you – for her that you would do for a – for someone who was a U.S. citizen, not just married to one?

**MS. PSAKI:** Obviously, the circumstances of this case have warranted a greater level of engagement, which we are doing in this case.

**QUESTION:** Okay.

**QUESTION:** Why? Because he's a citizen, or because it's the death penalty and a violation of religious freedom?

**MS. PSAKI:** Because – look at the story we've all been talking about about what is happening with this woman and the violation of religious freedom. And that's something we broadly speak about across the world and we're doing in this case for that reason.

**QUESTION:** But in terms of your outreach to the Sudanese authorities, is the State Department operating on the – not presumption, but on the – are you operating as if she was an American citizen who you have a – more of an obligation to defend?

**MS. PSAKI:** I wouldn't put it in those terms, but we're doing everything we can to push for her release.

**QUESTION:** But --

**QUESTION:** Could – if she was an American citizen, could you do more? What I'm getting at is if – are there limits to what you can do because she is not an American citizen?

**MS. PSAKI:** Obviously, in this case we're attending public hearings. That's something we would do for a U.S. citizen. I don't know what the other specifics would be, but we're doing everything we can possibly think of.

**QUESTION:** Didn't she just have a baby as well?

**MS. PSAKI:** Mm-hmm.

**QUESTION:** So the baby would be an American citizen.

**MS. PSAKI:** Well, again, as we've spoken to a little bit in here, we can't speak to the specifics of the case because we don't have a Privacy Act waiver. But I would say, broadly speaking, there needs to be proof of that genetic connection in order to have the rights of an American citizen for anyone.

**QUESTION:** Has that proof been authenticated?

**MS. PSAKI:** I don't – there are no more details I can provide on this case. We don't have a Privacy Act waiver.

**QUESTION:** Why can't you say publicly that if you go ahead and execute this woman, then our recourse of action will be 1, 2, 3, 4? Wouldn't that --

**MS. PSAKI:** I --

**QUESTION:** Wouldn't that have like more resonance?

**MS. PSAKI:** I appreciate the advice, Said. I think we're doing everything we can through the proper channels to make clear how strongly we feel about this case.

**QUESTION:** Such as what? I mean, there are incentives and disincentives. What are your --

**MS. PSAKI:** I just outlined the range of the steps we're taking.

## May 27, 2014

**Jen Psaki,** Spokesperson
**Daily Press Briefing, selections on Sudan**
**Washington, DC**

**QUESTION:** Yeah. Meriam Ibrahim, the woman sentenced to death for apostasy in Sudan gave birth to a baby today in jail. Her lawyer said that they didn't even take Meriam to a hospital; she just delivered inside the prison clinic. Do you have anything on this?

**MS. PSAKI:** Well, as you know, this is a case we've spoken out about frequently and strongly given our concerns about her treatment. That's something we've done along with a range of our international partners. I don't have any additional information or updates on this particular report today, but we continue to press the government to – for her release, and I know we're joined by a range of people around the world.

**QUESTION:** When you say that you're pressing the government, do you mean publicly or also is the Embassy working on this? Has the ambassador spoke to anyone at the foreign ministry? Has Secretary Kerry made any calls?

**MS. PSAKI:** I spoke to this last week, and we have been in touch with the government to express our – to make this – to make – press the case. Yes.

**QUESTION:** Sorry if I missed it --

**MS. PSAKI:** No, it's okay.

**QUESTION:** -- but would there be any aid implications in terms of religious freedom, whether U.S. aid to the country might be in jeopardy because of this?

**MS. PSAKI:** I wouldn't want to speculate on that; not that I'm aware of at this time.

**QUESTION:** Sorry, is there still a Privacy Act waiver issue here?

**MS. PSAKI:** For her husband?

**QUESTION:** In this case?

**MS. PSAKI:** Yes.

**QUESTION:** On both? Well, I guess she's not a U.S. – or she is a – or we don't know, you can't say. But there still is a Privacy Act issue – waiver.

**MS. PSAKI:** Correct, yes. Yes.

**QUESTION:** But the baby will be an American citizen.

**MS. PSAKI:** Again, this is a case where – and I can point you to all of the requirements that would need to be met. I have no other specifics I can talk about in relation to that given there's no Privacy Act waiver.

…

**QUESTION:** Have you sought to obtain one?

**MS. PSAKI:** I believe we have made that effort, yes.

## May 22, 2014

**Jen Psaki,** Spokesperson
**Daily Press Briefing, selections on Sudan**
**Washington, DC**

**QUESTION:** Daniel Wani, who is the husband of Meriam Ibrahim, has publicly stated that he is a U.S. citizen. Yesterday, Senators Blunt and Ayotte sent a letter to Secretary Kerry and the DHS Secretary Johnson that said of Meriam Ibrahim: "She is the wife of U.S. citizen Daniel Wani."

My first question is: Is that a true or a false statement – specifically, that Daniel Wani is a U.S. citizen and that Meriam Ibrahim is his wife?

**MS. PSAKI:** Well, we don't have a Privacy Act waiver in this case. I will say that – so I can't speak to that. I will say, and just to remind everyone, through our U.S. Embassy in Khartoum, the White House and the State Department have communicated our strong concern to the highest levels of the Government of Sudan over this case. We've also joined with other embassies in Khartoum to express our concern in a widely distributed public statement. U.S. Embassy officials have been engaged in the case from the earliest days. I can't speak to specifics, though, because of the reason I outlined.

**QUESTION:** So even though Mr. Wani has publicly stated in the press that he is a U.S. citizen, he says he's come to the State Department specifically to ask for help to bring his family here to the United States where he claims to be a citizen, you cannot say whether or not he is a citizen and whether this is his wife?

**MS. PSAKI:** I'm abiding by the law.

**QUESTION:** It's – it would be illegal for you to acknowledge that he's telling the truth when he tells reporters he is a U.S. citizen?

**MS. PSAKI:** A Privacy Act waiver has not been signed.

Okay, let's move on.

**QUESTION:** Okay. If in fact he were a U.S. citizen and this was his family being held in jail in Sudan because they're Christians, would it be the policy of the U.S. State Department that this family of a U.S. citizen should be allowed to come here to the United States?

**MS. PSAKI:** I'm not going to speculate on that. Obviously, we've expressed concern because of how horrific these reports and this case is. And we have done everything we can and everything possible as a U.S. – our U.S. Embassy has done on the ground.

**QUESTION:** So he needs to sign a written document saying that you can agree that he's a U.S. citizen?

**MS. PSAKI:** That's correct.

**QUESTION:** Right. I'd like to welcome my colleague to the anti-Privacy Act waiver campaign. Does he – is that enough? Or does she have to sign one as well?

**MS. PSAKI:** Well, obviously to speak to – broadly speaking, any individual – to the media --

**QUESTION:** Right.

**MS. PSAKI:** -- all of you --

**QUESTION:** So even if --

**MS. PSAKI:** -- they would have to sign a Privacy Act --

**QUESTION:** So even if he signed one and you were allowed to – you could only speak to him, you could not speak about his – her? Is that correct?

**MS. PSAKI:** I believe that's correct.

**QUESTION:** All right. And then did you – were you ever able to get answers to the questions that I had about this case a couple days ago about the senators' request or urging the U.S. to grant her asylum? Is it possible, either just logistically or legally possible, for you to grant someone asylum who is imprisoned – who is not on U.S. territory?

**MS. PSAKI:** Well, again Matt, this – as I mentioned the other day, is obviously under the purview of the Department of Homeland Security. They would be the appropriate outlet to speak to that, so I would point to them.

**QUESTION:** Is it – but is it not your understanding of the asylum law that they have to present themselves either in the United States and ask for it or at least to an embassy that is technically U.S. – an embassy or consulate, something that is – is that your understanding?

**MS. PSAKI:** That is typically how it has worked, but I am not an expert on asylee requests.

**QUESTION:** Okay. So the question, I guess – and maybe it is best directed at DHS – even if you wanted to grant someone asylum, you wouldn't be able to? Is that – unless they --

**MS. PSAKI:** Again, I would --

**QUESTION:** -- unless they showed up?

**MS. PSAKI:** I would point anyone to DHS for the across-the-board rule on that front.

…

**QUESTION:** Can I just go back to the thing – the conversation or the representations made to the Sudanese Government? Do you know at what level this is? Is there an ambassador in Khartoum now, or is it a charge or --

**MS. PSAKI:** I don't have the level, Matt, that the communications were done.

**QUESTION:** And is this something that Secretary Kerry would take up with the Sudanese foreign minister? I mean, the Sudanese foreign minister is, I believe, not among the people who you are banned from talking with, like Bashir, so --

**MS. PSAKI:** I don't want to speculate on that, but I can check and see if there's more clarity we can get all of you on that.

**QUESTION:** Okay. So if any – if there's been any contact between the U.S. and Sudan from Washington and also at what level? And does it just go the foreign ministry? Do you go to the presidency? Do you go to their justice ministry or whatever? Thank you.

## May 20, 2014

**Jen Psaki,** Spokesperson
**Daily Press Briefing, selections on Sudan**
**Washington, DC**

**QUESTION:** Jen – and as you mentioned some of this yesterday that the concern that the White House has expressed about this terrible case of Meriam Ibrahim who was sentenced to flogging and hanging. Apart from that White House statement, I'm wondering if you have any update on the letter that was sent by Senators Blunt and Ayotte to Secretary Kerry specifically asking for asylum to be considered and possibly granted. Is that under review?

**MS. PSAKI:** I'm aware of the letter. I'm not sure if we've received it yet. Sometimes it's announced before it's received, as you know. DHS would have oversight of that. Of course, we don't speculate on that; neither does DHS in terms of seekers or cases or anything along those lines. I will say, just since you gave me the opportunity, we are deeply disturbed, continue to be deeply disturbed by the decision by a Sudanese judge to sentence 27-year-old Meriam Ibrahim to death by hanging after she refused to recant her Christian faith and declare herself a Muslim. She was also sentenced to a hundred lashes for the charge of adultery. We call on the Government of Sudan to respect the right to freedom of religion, including one's right to change one's faith or beliefs, a right which is enshrined in international human rights law as well as in Sudan's own 2005 interim constitution. We call on Sudanese legal authorities to approach this case with the compassion that is in keeping with the values of the Sudanese people.

**QUESTION:** Has this building been in contact with Sudanese authorities about this case?

**MS. PSAKI:** We have been closely monitoring, responding to events in this case. We have joined with the United Kingdom, Canada, and the Netherlands in expressing our concerns. I think they are clear on our concerns. I don't have any specific readouts of direct contact, but we have been expressing our concerns in a broad means of manners.

**QUESTION:** Also on this letter that it's unclear if it's been received or not, but there is a specific call for Secretary Kerry to appoint an ambassador for religious freedom who would take up issues, I guess, of having to do with her being Christian and in the past having been Muslim. Is that something that's being considered? Is there a reason the post isn't filled right now?

**MS. PSAKI:** Oftentimes there's a process that is underway to find the right person, and certainly it's something the Secretary is committed to. I don't have any prediction of the timing, but it is something we certainly will be filling.

**QUESTION:** So it's already being done?

**QUESTION:** No one's been nominated, right?

**MS. PSAKI:** No, I don't believe so.

**QUESTION:** And sorry, just to tie this up. To be clear, when you said DHS would have authority on this, does that mean the letter – basically the letter was sent to the wrong building?

**MS. PSAKI:** Well, DHS, broadly speaking, has authority over asylum cases.

**QUESTION:** So the fact that the spouse is an American does not mean that consular rights or anything like that would be extended to her in this case?

**MS. PSAKI:** Broadly speaking, that's not typically how it works. We have seen reports identifying him as a U.S. citizen. We don't have any Privacy Act waiver, so I don't have any more details I can share.

**QUESTION:** Broadly speaking then, and the concerns of members of Congress aside, are you – is this government in a position under any administration to offer and grant asylum to someone who's in a foreign country's prison? I mean, I just don't understand how this would work. I mean, maybe DHS is the right place to ask, but it seems to me that members of Congress asking for this may be asking for something that's just not possible to do. Is that correct?

**MS. PSAKI:** Well, I'd point you to DHS for the history here, but certainly this is a horrific case and that's why everybody's so concerned about it.

**QUESTION:** No, no. I understand that, and I mean, I guess the concern of these people in Congress is admirable. But getting up and saying that the United States should offer and grant asylum to someone who is not in your custody, I'm not – is that possible to do?

**MS. PSAKI:** I don't know the intricacies of the law on that front, Matt.

**QUESTION:** Is the – there is a law that governs asylum, right? It's not – in fact, Congress wrote the law on how asylum can be granted, is that correct? It's not like an executive decision?

**MS. PSAKI:** I believe so. And – but again --

**QUESTION:** Okay.

**MS. PSAKI:** -- we don't have jurisdiction over that.

## May 19, 2014

**Jen Psaki,** Spokesperson
**Daily Press Briefing, selections on Sudan**
**Washington, DC**

**QUESTION:** Yeah, I'd like to ask a few questions about the situation of Meriam Ibrahim, the Sudanese woman who was sentenced to death for Christianity. The Morning Star News, which is a Christian news site, reported that Daniel Wani, her husband – she's in prison with her 20-month-old son Martin. They reported – Wani said U.S. embassy officials in Khartoum have told him he must prove he is the father with a DNA test before they would try to help. They quote him as saying, "I will have to take a DNA sample in Khartoum and send it to the USA for testing. I provided wedding documents and the baby's birth certificate," and doors were closed on his face. He continues to say, "I've tried to apply for papers to travel to the USA with my wife and child, but the American Embassy in Sudan did not help me. My son is an American citizen living in a different – difficult situation in prison."

First, is Meriam Ibrahim's husband, Daniel Wani, a U.S. citizen? And is that 20-month-old boy in prison, by virtue of being his son, also a U.S. citizen?

**MS. PSAKI:** Well, I don't have any more details on this than what the White – the statement the White House put out. Typically we don't confirm those type of details, but I'm happy to check and see if there's more to share.

**QUESTION:** You don't know whether that little boy in prison is a U.S. citizen?

**MS. PSAKI:** I don't have any more details to share.

**QUESTION:** Did the embassy in Khartoum ask Mr. Wani to provide DNA evidence that that was his son?

**MS. PSAKI:** We're happy to check and see if there's more to share.

**QUESTION:** You don't know whether that's the case?

**MS. PSAKI:** Happy to check and see if there's more to share.

**QUESTION:** So as of this moment, the U.S. Government does not know whether that 20-month-old boy in prison in Sudan is an American citizen imprisoned because he's a Christian?

**MS. PSAKI:** I think I've addressed your questions, and I'm happy to follow up with you after the briefing.

**QUESTION:** Thank you.

**QUESTION:** Do you know, Jen, is there a Privacy Act issue here?

**MS. PSAKI:** I'd have to check and see. I know we've issued a statement from the White House just yesterday on this issue.

## April 9, 2014

**Jen Psaki,** Spokesperson
**Daily Press Briefing, selections on Sudan**
**Washington, DC**

**QUESTION:** Do you have a reaction to the decision of Khartoum to expel an American country chief of a UN agency? They have accused her of interfering into domestic affairs. Do you have the reasons of this incident?

**MS. PSAKI:** We've seen those reports, and I believe it was an AFP report. When I came down here, we didn't have any independent confirmation of that from the ground. So let me circle back with our team and see if there's anything new, if there's any confirmation from our end. I suspect we may have a comment on it.

## October 1, 2013

**Jen Psaki,** Spokesperson
**Daily Press Briefing, selections on Sudan**
**Washington, DC**

**QUESTION:** Thank you. I wanted to ask about Sudan.

**MS. PSAKI:** Okay.

**QUESTION:** President Bashir came out today and talked about the fuel price hikes, which have unleashed these protests --

**MS. PSAKI:** Mm-hmm.

**QUESTION:** -- at which we've seen a number of deaths and what was described --

**MS. PSAKI:** Mm-hmm.

**QUESTION:** -- by yourself as a brutal crackdown. I wondered – he said that -- he explained by saying that it was because otherwise he feared the Sudanese economy could collapse. Is that the U.S. reading of the situation? Is the economy so fragile in Sudan that this action was, in fact, justified, to raise these fuel prices?

**MS. PSAKI:** Well, we spoke to this a little bit yesterday, and our position hasn't changed regarding our condemning of the brutal crackdown on protesters, condemning the violence by government forces and protesters, and we are also further alarmed by the reports that the Sudanese Government has arrested or detained civil society activists, shutdown independent media, and restricted access to the internet and cellphone networks. So our position remains that we urge the government to allow its citizens full and unhindered access to the internet and respect press freedoms and to bring an end to the violence.

In terms of his comments and his justification, I'd have to check with our team on that. But I don't believe our concern about what's been happening there has changed.

**QUESTION:** Jen, do you have any greater clarity on why the Secretary didn't raise that set of issues in yesterday's meeting?

**MS. PSAKI:** Not beyond what I told you yesterday.

## September 19, 2013

**Marie Harf,** Deputy Spokesperson
**Daily Press Briefing, selections on Sudan**
**Washington, DC**

**QUESTION**: Is there any update on President Bashir and his visa?

**MS. HARF:** Let's see. I don't believe so.

**QUESTION:** We asked for a lot of information yesterday and you never came back to us.

**MS. HARF:** I took a lot of questions. I have a little more information in my book on this today, everyone will be happy to know.

I don't have any update for you. There are a variety of considerations in play with respect to President Bashir's visa request, including the outstanding warrant for his arrest. But --

**QUESTION:** So it is part of the review?

**MS. HARF:** We're not going to sort through these considerations publicly. We're going to continue to do so privately and deliberately. I don't have anything further for you on his specific visa request today.

**QUESTION:** Well, wait. But you said that --

**MS. HARF:** Mm-hmm.

**QUESTION:** -- including the indictment.

**MS. HARF:** The outstanding warrant is one of the variety of considerations in play --

**QUESTION:** So it is a consideration.

**MS. HARF:** It is a consideration. I just said that.

**QUESTION:** Okay. But the next sentence doesn't make any sense because you --

**MS. HARF:** I'm not going to sort through all of these considerations publicly or talk about how we're considering it.

**QUESTION:** Well, you just did one, and that was the question.

**MS. HARF:** I said we were taking one thing into consideration, yes.

**QUESTION:** All right. Can you – quite apart from this case --

**MS. HARF:** Mm-hmm.

**QUESTION:** -- were you able to find out what your obligations are with the headquarters agreement and whether a visiting head of state that you grant a visa to, whether you can turn around and arrest that person even though they enjoy immunity?

**MS. HARF:** So as I said yesterday, we do have obligations as host nation for the UN. Let me see what else I have. And what was your second question, Matt? I'm sorry.

**QUESTION:** Well, I want to know if it's legal for you to issue a visa to a foreign head of state, and then, because once he arrives, he or she arrives in the country he does have immunity – sovereign immunity if not diplomatic immunity – if it's legal or if the Administration believes it is, in fact, possible to then arrest that person who you have essentially invited to come to your country.

**MS. HARF:** Well, we've clearly strongly supported the ICC's efforts to hold accountable those responsible for the kind of war crimes he's been accused of.

**QUESTION:** But wait, wait. My question is not – I'm going to get to that because yesterday the ICC asked the United States to grant him the visa and then arrest him. But I want to know if it is legal for the government, if the Administration believes it would be legal for – whether it's Bashir or Mr. X from I don't know where --

**MS. HARF:** Right.

**QUESTION:** -- anyone, any foreign head of state who's here who you grant a visa to for the UN, if you can then – if it's legal for you to arrest --

**MS. HARF:** So this is what I know, and I don't know if it's exactly in answer to your question. There are a lot of legal questions here. This is what I know: That generally speaking, because the United States is not a party to the Rome Statute of the ICC, the obligations that apply to member-states do not necessarily apply to us. Again, that's generally speaking. I don't have any more details for you about what – a guess as to whether or not we could do what you just asked about. I don't have a legal opinion on that.

**QUESTION:** Okay. Well, could you find out if there is one? Just – I'm interested to know whether there is some kind of ability --

**MS. HARF:** If we have a legal obligation or ability?

**QUESTION:** No, no, not – the ability --

**MS. HARF:** Ability. Okay.

**QUESTION:** -- to arrest someone who has immunity on this country.

And now in terms of the ICC and the fact that you're not a party to it, you did, in fact, vote in the Security Council in favor of setting up – of referring this to the ICC. Is that correct?

**MS. HARF:** And I said we strongly support the ICC's efforts to uphold accountable those responsible for war crimes, including, of course, in Darfur.

**QUESTION:** Right. Okay. But you can't commit – but you can't say, one, whether you would – whether you're willing to give him a visa so he could, in fact, be arrested?

**MS. HARF:** I'm not speaking at all more specifically on this case.

**QUESTION:** Or two, if you could even do it legally because of your headquarters agreement – because of the headquarters agreement.

**MS. HARF:** Well, on the first question, I'm not going to speak any more about his case specifically.

**QUESTION:** Okay. Well, then could you take the second --

**MS. HARF:** On the second question, I'll take it. I don't know the answer.

**QUESTION:** All right, and then just my last one on this.

**MS. HARF:** Mm-hmm.

**QUESTION:** In two – the ICC – let me start again. The last update to the list of Article 98 agreements that the U.S. has signed was – that I could find was updated in 2011.

**MS. HARF:** Mm-hmm.

**QUESTION:** It had 102 – there were 102 countries that had signed it. Sudan is not one of them. But I'm wondering if the – in the intervening time between when this list was compiled, in I think January, end of January 2011 and now, because it is three – more than three years – if you may have – and I don't know – signed an Article 98 agreement with Sudan and whether or not, if you have, it is a reciprocal agreement or a nonreciprocal agreement.

**MS. HARF:** I don't know the answer to that question. I'm happy to take it.

**QUESTION:** Okay, that would – thank you.

**MS. HARF:** Mm-hmm. Anything else on Bashir?

## February 8, 2013

**Rapid and Significant Deterioration in Security in North Darfur and Jebel Marra**
**Press Statement**
**Victoria Nuland**, Spokesperson
**Daily Press Briefing**
**Washington, DC**
**February 8, 2013**

The United States is profoundly concerned by violent clashes between heavily armed tribal militias in North Darfur and between Sudanese government forces and rebels in Jebel Marra. Recent violence has resulted in civilian deaths and displaced some 100,000 people in need of humanitarian assistance.

In just the first month of 2013, more civilians have been newly displaced by violence in Darfur than in all of 2012. To meet the humanitarian needs of those affected by these clashes, we call on the Sudanese government to grant UN agencies unrestricted access to all areas of Darfur, and to work closely with UN agencies, humanitarian actors, and the African Union - United Nations Hybrid operation in Darfur (UNAMID) to deliver assistance.

We urge the Sudanese government to urgently disarm militias in Darfur, in accordance with UN Security Council Resolution 1556; to cease aerial bombardments; and to implement the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur as the basis for a more inclusive and effective peace process.