## <u>Press Releases: Sudan Commits To</u> <u>Strengthening Cooperation and</u> <u>Meaningful Reforms</u>

Press Statement Heather Nauert

Department Spokesperson

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Yesterday, during bilateral meetings in Washington, D.C., Deputy Secretary of State John J. Sullivan and the Sudanese Foreign Minister Dirdeiry Mohamed Ahmed discussed the launch of the "Phase II" framework for our bilateral engagement. Phase II is designed to expand our bilateral cooperation, facilitate meaningful reforms to enhance stability in Sudan, and achieve further progress in a number of areas of longstanding concern. The United States welcomes Sudan's commitment to making progress in key areas. Those key areas include expanding counterterrorism cooperation, enhancing human rights protections and practices, including freedoms of religion and press, improving humanitarian access, ceasing internal hostilities and creating a more conducive environment for progress in Sudan's peace process, taking steps to address certain outstanding terrorism-related claims, and adhering to UN Security Council resolutions related to North Korea. As part of this process, the United States is prepared to initiate the process of rescinding Sudan's designation as a State Sponsor of Terrorism if the determination is made that all of the relevant statutory criteria have been met, and if Sudan makes progress in addressing each of the six key areas of mutual concern prioritized by the Phase II framework. The United States is ready to cooperate with Sudan and to monitor progress as we seek meaningful developments for the benefit of the Sudanese people and the region.

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