

Press Briefing on Sudan
US Deputy Secretary of State Robert Zoellick
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"[...] But this is going to be an ongoing problem because there is some - a line or story I saw yesterday that Jan Pronk, the UN Representative - who I will see, by the way, in Sudan - talked about the difficulty of getting the two rebel groups to cooperate with AU mediators by pinpointing their positions on the ground. You see, the government has told us what their positions are and the rebels haven't been able to explain their positions. So - and then the **other part that's related to Darfur is the implementation of the two UN resolutions, you know, the one with the International Criminal Court which is in its own process.** And then the economic sanctions, and that is winding its way through the UN process. [...]

QUESTION: Do you know anything on the timing on the ICC? Are there any smoke signals coming out of the stacks or anything about how far away they may be from -

DEPUTY SECRETARY ZOELLICK: No. As you know, it's a separate legal process and so - and I asked about this this morning - or this week - because I, you know, came back from Iraq and Jordan, and we don't even have a sense of who the names are yet.

QUESTION: The prosecutor, the ICC prosecutor, has gone down to Sudan to do the preliminary work (inaudible). What do we think the next step is? Announcing indictments, putting a list of names out there, or is it - I mean, I understand that they've collected some of the material from the African Union monitors. They've, you know, gotten -

DEPUTY SECRETARY ZOELLICK: I don't know the - I would presume they'd start with investigations (inaudible)?

STAFF: Yes, sir. We estimate the investigations will probably take some months before (inaudible).

DEPUTY SECRETARY ZOELLICK: Here's, gentlemen, how I would - how at least I would think about this. This is a - this is an important sort of diplomatic dimension. In other words, **it hangs over people, as a sense of the United Nations, countries around the world, were sending a signal about accountability for these actions. And so in a way, even though it hasn't proceeded to the investigation or sort of trial stage, it's a useful deterrence against others and allows us to emphasize a tool about the need to stop the violence** from, you know, local militias to in-between government officials to high-level government officials. There will be a whole other stage when it actually starts to proceed. But it's - you know, so, for example, I think I might have mentioned this, when I was on the last trip when I was meeting the governor in Darfur, you know, I would reference the accountability process and so on and so forth. So that's how it at least fits into the sort of the diplomatic context.