

Africa Report by Douglas DeGroot

West: No Aid for Unity Government in Zimbabwe

June 19—Morgan Tsvangirai, Prime Minister of the Zimbabwe unity government, was offered a mere pittance of the aid needed to rebuild the economy, during his three-week tour of Western industrial nations. Zimbabwe's economy has been destroyed after years of financial warfare. Almost all of the small amount of aid has been designated to go through NGOs, and therefore won't do anything for the economy. Most of it, according to African sources, will go to non-Zimbabweans working in the governance and democracy fields.

Thus, with new humanitarian disasters being predicted because of imminent food shortages, the stage is set for the implementation of the London-based Economist Intelligence Unit assessment that unrest in Zimbabwe, fueled by grinding poverty, could bring down the unity government.

The justification for not aiding Zimbabwe was dictated by British Minister for Africa, Asia, and the UN, Lord Mark Malloch-Brown, who bluntly warned June 9, while in Mozambique, that Britain would halt aid to Zimbabwe, "if there are attacks on opposition supporters or other violence." He repeated his "no" to Tsvangirai in the London *Times* today, the day the Prime Minister arrived in London on his final stop.

However, associates of Tsvangirai indicate that the real reason for the denial, by the Western industrial nations, of aid for economic reconstruction, was the precondition demanded by the British that Zimbabwe agree to deregulate and open the economy to the globalized looting financial apparatus. This was something the Mugabe government had always refused to do, and

Tsvangirai's associates also have said that this is unacceptable to the present unity government: "We have to protect our industry," they insist.

Tsvangirai said in Washington, that Zimbabwe's economy had fallen from number two in the region, after South Africa, down to the lowest. But, in the face of several provocative anti-Mugabe questions, Tsvangirai refused to attack the former Prime Minister. He said the framework has been set up for us to talk to resolve our differences.

As for a purported assassination list targeting members of Tsvangirai's party, that had supposedly been drawn up by people in Mugabe's party, Tsvangirai said flatly that he didn't believe such a list existed.

Gration Drops Genocide Charge Against Sudan

June 18—Retired Air Force Maj. Gen. J. Scott Gration, the Obama Administration's special envoy to Sudan, yesterday announced a shift in U.S. policy towards Sudan. Instead of continuing to support the British imperial policy of charging that Sudan was carrying out a policy of genocide as it put down a British-instigated anti-government rebellion in Darfur, Gration said that Sudan is not carrying out a "coordinated" campaign of mass murder in the Darfur region.

This was Gration's first press conference since he was appointed special envoy three months ago, and comes as the U.S. Administration is finishing a review of its Sudan policy. Gration's move has exposed the divide between him and the Obama Administration's hardline anglophile ambassador to the UN, Susan E. Rice, who was, as of a few days ago according to reports, still

accusing Sudan of genocide.

Instead of declaring Sudan a no-fly zone which would be militarily enforced, as Rice and other Obama advisors had advocated during the Presidential campaign and after the election, Gration has organized a conference on Sudan, not focussed on Darfur, but on ensuring the implementation of the 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) between North and South that ended the protracted civil war. The CPA is now in trouble, and in his press conference, Gration put a priority on saving the agreement. The CPA agreement was signed, despite the Darfur rebellion being triggered during the final negotiations of the CPA.

Gration has traveled to Sudan, Qatar, Europe, and China, seeking to buttress the CPA. The summit organized by Gration will include top representatives from the North and South of Sudan, plus officials from more than 30 countries and organizations, such as the UN Security Council, China, and the foreign ministers of neighboring Kenya and Ethiopia.

Gration is reported to have called for easing some U.S. sanctions, and upgrading American diplomatic relations with Sudan. Gration said: "We need to have engagement with all parties to save lives in Sudan, to bring about a lasting peace." He said that, as a result of his initial talks with the Sudan government, "We've essentially closed the humanitarian gap that existed in Darfur when the 13 [NGOs] were expelled."

Sudan's ambassador to the UN, Abdalmahmood Abdalhaleem, said that Gration's invitation to the conference marked a major improvement in relations. He said he is hoped that the conference will give a major boost to the peace efforts in Sudan.