



Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission Hearing

Witness Biographies

Conflict and Hunger in Sudan

Panel I



Michael Dunford has been serving as the Regional Director of the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) Eastern Africa Bureau based in Nairobi since June 2020. Mr. Dunford is a lawyer who has worked for the United Nations for over 20 years, commencing at the WFP 2001. As Regional Director, he oversees WFP operations, providing strategic guidance, supervision, and support across the region in ten countries – Burundi, Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, and Uganda. He steers WFP’s interventions in providing vital food and nutrition assistance to food-insecure populations. He previously served as WFP Deputy Country Director in Uganda, Bangladesh, and the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea. He was deployed as WFP Emergency Coordinator at the onset of the Rohingya refugee crisis in Cox’s Bazar in 2017. He first joined WFP in its Headquarters in Rome as Head of the Commercial and Constitutional Law Branch of the Legal Office, after practicing law in Australia and the United Kingdom. Mr. Dunford is an Australian national and holds a BA in Political Science from the Australian National University and a LLB from the University of Technology, Sydney, Australia.

Panel II



Avril Benoît is the executive director of Doctors Without Borders/Médecins Sans Frontières in the United States (MSF USA). She has worked with the international medical humanitarian organization since 2006 in various operational management and executive leadership roles, including as the director of communications and development at MSF’s operational center in Geneva. Throughout her career with MSF, Ms. Benoît has contributed to major movement-wide initiatives, including the global mobilization to end attacks on hospitals and health workers. She has worked as a country director and project coordinator for MSF, leading operations to provide aid to refugees, asylum seekers, and migrants in Mauritania, South Sudan, and South Africa. Her

strategic analysis and communications assignments have taken her to countries including Democratic Republic of Congo, Eswatini, Haiti, Iraq, Lebanon, Mexico, Mozambique, Nigeria, Sudan, Syria, and Ukraine. From 2006 to 2012, Ms. Benoît served as director of communications with MSF Canada. Prior to joining MSF, she had a distinguished 20-year career as an award-winning journalist and broadcaster in Canada.



Hanin Ahmed is from Omdurman, Sudan. She has a master's degree in Gender and Development from Ahfad University for Women and is an activist in the field of women's and youth rights. On April 16, 2023, she joined young people from Khartoum state who put their fears aside to volunteer for Emergency Response Rooms (ERRs), local efforts to serve the most basic needs of Sudanese citizens, including soup kitchens, medical assistance, and evacuation centers. Ms. Ahmed was one of the founders of an ERR that covers several neighborhoods in her home city, Omdurman, across the River Nile from Khartoum. She presented research on women and youth political participation in Sudan at Oxford University in 2019 and discussed gender integration in security sector reform at the Academic Council on the United Nations System (ACUNS) in 2023.



Dr. Ashraf Affan, MD, is a Sudanese American pediatrician based in Jacksonville, Florida. He is known for his work as the founder of the Angel Kids Foundation, a non-profit organization that focuses on addressing social determinants of health for underserved children and their families in the greater Jacksonville area. Dr. Affan also served as national faculty in the Transforming Clinical Practice Initiative (TCPI) by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) from 2015 to 2019, which is considered the largest quality improvement program in the history of the USA. His passion for children's issues extends beyond the USA to global concerns.



Tom Dannenbaum is Associate Professor of International Law at the Fletcher School of Law & Diplomacy, where he is also Co-Director of the Center for International Law & Governance. Prior to joining Fletcher, he taught at University College London and Yale Law School. Mr. Dannenbaum writes on the law of armed conflict, the law governing the use of force, international criminal law, human rights, shared responsibility, and international judging. His articles have appeared in a range of journals and have received multiple awards, including the American Society of International Law's (ASIL) International Legal Theory Scholarship Prize in 2022 for his work on siege starvation and ASIL's Lieber Prize in 2017 for his work on the crime of aggression. His writing on peacekeeping has been cited by the Hague Court of Appeal and the International Law Commission. Mr. Dannenbaum's book, *The Crime of Aggression, Humanity, and the Soldier*, was published by Cambridge University Press in 2018. He has a PhD from Princeton, a JD from Yale, and a BA from Stanford.