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**THE WHITE HOUSE
CORRESPONDENCE TRACKING WORKSHEET**

ID# 564881

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C0041

DATE RECEIVED: 07/22/2003

NAME OF CORRESPONDENT: THE HONORABLE ELLEN O. TAUSCHER

SUBJECT: BELIEVES THAT U.S. ACTIONS COULD MAKE A CRUCIAL DIFFERENCE WITH ISSUE REGARDING THE CONGO AND LIBERIA AND THAT EXISTING PEACE FRAMEWORKS MUST BE STRENGTHENED TO PREVENT FURTHER LOSS OF LIFE AND REGIONAL INSTABILITY

		ACTION		DISPOSITION		
ROUTE TO: OFFICE/AGENCY	(STAFF NAME)	ACTION CODE	DATE YY/MM/DD	TYPE RESP	C D	COMPLETED YY/MM/DD
LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS	DAVID HOBBS	ORG	2003/07/22		<i>(initials)</i>	
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 A - APPROPRIATE ACTION
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ELLEN O. TAUSCHER
10TH DISTRICT, CALIFORNIA

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564881

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-0510

July 3, 2003

The Honorable George W. Bush
President
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear President Bush:

As you prepare for your trip to Africa next week, I am writing to draw your attention to two disastrous conflicts where action by the United States could make a crucial difference. In both the Congo and Liberia, existing peace frameworks must be strengthened to prevent further loss of life and regional instability.

The United States does not have unlimited resources and cannot solve all of the world's problems. What it can do, however, is make more aggressive use of diplomacy and economic and political tools to solve global conflicts so that the use of military force in every case is a last resort and, if it becomes necessary, is sanctioned by the international community.

I believe the situations in the Congo and Liberia exemplify the type of threats that the United States should address and provide the right model for U.S. intervention for at least three reasons. In both cases, there is a clear objective: to alleviate large-scale suffering in a country whose dissolution would destabilize the surrounding region. Second, the United States has the ability to project force decisively. And third, the United Nations, several African nations and our major international allies are all interested in supporting and sharing the burden of an intervention to restore the peace.

With regard to the humanitarian objective, in the last decade, there has been a growing consensus that the use of force by the international community is legitimate in instances when a government severely represses the human rights of its people or where the erosion of central governmental authority creates the conditions in which innocent people are threatened. Interventions which the U.S. either lead or supported in the 1990s have established precedents for humanitarian interventions to prevent the large-scale loss of life such as ending the famine in Somalia; protecting Shia and Kurd minorities in Iraq; ending the genocide in Bosnia; and stopping ethnic cleansing in Kosovo. Conversely, the absence of a response to the Rwandan genocide of 1994 has largely been seen as a missed opportunity to avert a tragedy.

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The second point has been proved amply enough over the last two years with successful military operations in Afghanistan, Iraq and the Philippines.

With regard to allied support for intervention, the war on terrorism has generated global concern for the dangers posed by failing states and a growing appreciation by U.S. allies and new partners that only cooperative action can bring stability to some of the world's hot spots.

As you know, many governments around the world lack the legitimacy and capacity to govern. Weak states struggle against insurgents bent on their overthrow or warlords seeking to dominate ungoverned regions. Often, they are countries that have emerged from or are slipping back into conflict, or have central governments that lack control over parts of their country. In many of these countries, internal problems and competition over resources is compounded by the involvement of neighboring states who exploit the chaos by supporting rebel movements.

The tragedy of September 11 and the war on terrorism have taught us that terrorist groups and extremists make extensive use of these failed states. They often take advantage of the states' porous borders and lack of law enforcement to move drugs, weapons and money around the globe. Al-Qaeda has been known to hide in half a dozen African countries where they have trained and executed operations against American or allied targets.

I commend you for drawing an explicit link between failed states and American national interests, stating in the first chapter of your National Security Strategy that "America is now threatened less by conquering states than we are by failing ones." And in the cover letter of that document, you stress that "the events of September 11, 2001, taught us that weak states, like Afghanistan, can pose as great a danger to our national interests as strong states."

In your remarks last month to the Corporate Council on Africa, you called on President Taylor of Liberia to step down and stated that the United States would help bring peace to that country. With regard to the Congo, you called for the formation of a transition government in Congo that all parties to the conflict would support.

For those objectives to be fulfilled it is vital that the United States play a more active role in Africa than it has so far. Because of your engagement of the United Nations and regional allies, important groundwork has been laid to share the costs and risks of an intervention with many partners.

In the case of Liberia, the Secretary General of the United Nations wrote to the Security Council last week that "broader international action is urgently needed to reverse Liberia's drift toward total disintegration" and called for the creation of a "highly-trained and well-equipped multinational force, under the lead of a member state, to prevent a major humanitarian tragedy and to stabilize the situation in that country."

I am deeply concerned by the recent surge in violence against civilians in a country that has been wracked by fourteen years of conflict that killed 200,000 people in the 1990s alone. As you know, in a recent indictment by the neighboring U.N. war-crimes tribunal in Sierra Leone, Taylor was also accused of crimes against humanity in connection with the civil war in that country.

As you also mentioned in your speech, the United States has a clear interest in supporting the efforts of African governments to build effective peacekeeping forces. I believe that you should offer to have the United States participate in or assist a peacekeeping force that would be authorized under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations and would include African nations and others who have shown an interest in resolving the conflict.

With regard to the Congo, I believe the United States should be much more involved in conflict resolution and peacemaking. While diplomatic, logistical or economic inducements might be used, the war in the Congo, which has claimed close to five million lives in over four and a half years, can only be ended through a multinational military intervention. The deployment last month of a small European rapid reaction force to replace a previously failed attempt by 700 Uruguayan U.N. peacekeepers to stabilize the situation in eastern Congo will do little to end the violence beyond the town of Bunia, where the local U.N. mission is located.

A dozen brutal wars are taking place in eastern Congo today, and I urge you to take this opportunity to consider a multinational force that could stabilize the country, ensure that the transitional government does not collapse, prevent further violence, and help disarm the different parties.

I applaud your efforts to focus the United States' attention on a continent that we have ignored for too long and appreciate this opportunity to make some suggestions as to the effective use of U.S. power to solve global conflicts.

I wish you the best for your trip and look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ellen O. Tauscher". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end.

Ellen O. Tauscher
Member of Congress