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BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

-- The President is unequivocally committed to a strong posture against international terrorism and to the protection of American lives abroad, including diplomats.

-- The President, no less than any other American, strongly deplored the tragic murders ~~which occurred against~~ ^{of} our diplomats in 1973. The Government of Sudan was well aware of American sentiment over this tragedy and of our concern that the terrorists involved be dealt with appropriately.

-- In the case of these terrorists, they were tried, put in jail in Sudan, and then sent to Egypt where, they remain in jail. Terrorist situations have occurred worldwide but at least in this case those responsible remain in jail. That is not usually the case. We believe there is a strong mutual interest in maintaining good bilateral relations with Sudan. Also, the Government of Sudan, and President Nimeiri personally, were very helpful in securing the release of five American citizens that had been detained in Eritrea for several months.