

RELEASE IN PART
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From: Mills, Cheryl D <MillsCD@state.gov>
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To: H
Subject: FW: WP Gration item, in case you missed it

From: Vietor, Tommy [mailto:
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Ambassador for life

Career Foreign Service ambassadors almost never serve much longer than their traditional three-year terms overseas. There have been a few exceptions, most famously former ambassador to Israel *Sam Lewis*, who was in Tel Aviv for eight years until 1985. But the rule generally applies.

This summer, however, Ambassador to Kenya *Michael E. Ranneberger*, a veteran Africa hand, apparently will begin his fifth year on the job in Nairobi, and there's no nominee in sight to replace him.

That sparked speculation that the administration might want to extend Ranneberger in order to hold the job open for Sudan special envoy *J. Scott Gration*, should Gration work out the Sudan mess. Gration, Loop Fans recall, grew up in Africa and became tight with President Obama when he escorted the then-senator as he toured his ancestral homeland -- or birthplace, as some folks say.

Gration, a retired Air Force general, early on had been looked at for a top administration job and perhaps as a replacement for Ranneberger. But we're told that's not happening anytime soon because the White House is not about to pull him off the full-time Sudan portfolio, despite some criticism that he's too soft on the war criminals. "The ball's not even rolling in that direction," one source said.