

## **40 Organizations Call on Congress to Pass the Darfur Peace and Accountability Act and to Restore \$50 million in funding for the African Union Mission in Sudan**

December 8, 2005

Dear Senator/Representative,

On July 22, 2004—17 months ago—Congress declared the situation in Darfur, Sudan, genocide. On September 9, 2004, the Bush Administration followed with its own declaration of genocide. Yet, the killing continues. As organizations working to reduce suffering in Darfur, raise public awareness of the crisis, and promote a peaceful resolution to the conflicts in Sudan, we urge Congress to take two critical steps to help protect civilians in Darfur: **1) pass the Darfur Peace and Accountability Act with strong and binding language, and 2) include \$50 million in the final FY06 military appropriations bill to support the African Union mission in Sudan (AMIS).**

Congressional leadership to protect civilians in Darfur is needed urgently. More than two years after the conflict in Darfur erupted, hundreds of thousands are dead, two million people remain displaced, and the small AU mission still does not have adequate support. In recent weeks, we have witnessed a new surge in violence against civilians, humanitarian workers, and AMIS personnel. Civilians suffer harassment, beatings, rape and murder on a daily basis, while humanitarian organizations are hampered in their ability to provide basic services to hundreds of thousands of displaced people. Attacks against women and girls continue at an alarming rate. Recent fighting around Gereida, a camp in South Darfur, forced nearly 18,000 people to flee from their villages.

We commend Congress and the administration for their leadership in seeking to restore peace in Sudan. The Bush administration played a critical role in helping negotiate a peaceful end to the 21-year civil war between North and South Sudan, and since Congress first declared genocide, it has appropriated significant funding to alleviate suffering. The U.S. has taken the lead in pressing for an international response to the crisis in Darfur at the UN, supporting the deployment and expansion of an African Union mission, and providing critical humanitarian aid. However, the efforts of the U.S. and the international community thus far have failed to provide adequate protection for the people of Darfur or advance a peaceful resolution to the conflict.

Before the end of the 2005 session, Congress must act to help better protect civilians. The Darfur Peace and Accountability Act (S. 1462/H.R. 3127) is an important step toward strengthening civilian protection, ensuring accountability and promoting peace, and demonstrating U.S. leadership for more effective international action to end the crisis. **We commend the Senate for passing its version of the bill on November 18 and urge the House to follow quickly with passage of already agreed upon binding language in its version. We urge House and Senate to negotiate final differences in the bill swiftly and to send this legislation to the President for his signature.**

We also urge Congress to restore the \$50 million to support AMIS that was stripped during the FY06 foreign operations appropriations conference, after being unanimously approved by the Senate earlier this year. We were dismayed that the U.S. backtracked on its public commitments to provide financial support, especially as the AU has stated clearly that its mission in Darfur remains underfunded, with a shortfall of more than \$150 million. We are also deeply concerned by impending cuts of as much as 60% in U.S. humanitarian assistance to Sudan expected in the coming year, which will leave more lives at risk. The FY06 military appropriations conference is the last opportunity this year for Congress to appropriate much needed funds to strengthen civilian protection in Darfur. **We urge all members to support inclusion of at least \$50 million to support AMIS in the final FY06 military appropriations bill.**

Your leadership is urgently needed to help protect the people of Darfur.

Sincerely,

Africa Faith and Justice Network

American Jewish World Service

Anti-Defamation League

B'nai B'rith International

Church World Service

Citizens for Global Solutions

Common Global Ministries Board, United

Church of Christ and Christian Church

(Disciples of Christ)

Darfur Peace and Development Organization

Dear Sudan

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Washington Office

Friends Committee on National Legislation

Genocide Intervention Network

Global Grassroots

Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society

International Crisis Group

International Peace Operations Association

International Rescue Committee

Jewish Council for Public Affairs

Mercy Corps

National STAND Coalition

Physicians for Human Rights

Presbyterian Church, (USA), Washington

Office

Refugees International

Save Darfur Coalition

Sojourners

Union for Reform Judaism

Unitarian Universalist Association of

Congregations

Unitarian Universalist Service Committee

United Methodist Church, General Board of

Church and Society

Women's Commission for Refugee Women and

Children

State and Local Organizations

All Saints Episcopal Church, Pasadena, CA

Dear Sudan: Love Contra Costa County

Dear Sudan, Love Marin

Massachusetts Coalition to Save Darfur

New Vision Partners, Los Angeles, CA

Pittsburgh Darfur Emergency Coalition

Students United for Darfur Awareness Now,

University of North Carolina Chapel Hill

Temple Isaiah, Lafayette, CA

Western Massachusetts Darfur Coalition