

June 27, 2008

The Honorable George W. Bush
United States President
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20500

RE: U.S. Action to Support Peace and Stability in Sudan

Dear President Bush,

As you know, U.S. special envoy Richard Williamson spoke of “apocalyptic” conditions while touring the destroyed town of Abeyi last month, where fighting displaced an estimated 90,000 civilians. Yet, recent fighting in Abeyi is only the latest sign of escalating tensions and violence throughout Sudan. The Justice and Equality Movement’s (JEM) military attacks in Omdurman last month dealt a severe blow to the prospects for peace. The subsequent Government of Sudan’s (GOS) response led to repression and the indiscriminate killing of civilians in Darfur and Khartoum.

U.S. leadership and action are needed immediately to build support for a political solution to the Darfur crisis and prevent a resurgence of the North-South conflict. We are deeply concerned about the human toll and regional security implications of intensified fighting throughout the country. We urge you to use your remaining months in office to garner support for a coordinated multilateral plan of action to support peace and stability in Sudan based on the following principles.

***Support regional security mechanisms to ensure CPA implementation.** Efforts undertaken by your administration to broker the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) helped end the longest running civil war in Africa. However, escalating tensions and recent violence in Abeyi could reignite full scale war between the GOS and the Sudan People’s Liberation Movement (SPLM). While the GOS and the SPLM recently signed a roadmap agreement to settle the status of Abeyi, the U.S. and broader international community need to devote far more attention to ensuring full implementation of the CPA.

The East African regional development organization—the Intergovernmental Development Authority (IGAD)—tried to organize a conference to help resolve the CPA crisis in April 2007, but failed due to other regional crises and insufficient support from the international community. As a member of the IGAD Partners Forum (IPF), the U.S. needs to more vigorously support IGAD in its efforts to oversee implementation of the CPA, including the recent Abeyi roadmap agreement and other unresolved issues such as oil-revenue sharing provisions and final demarcation of the North-South boundaries.

***Reinvigorate the peace process in Darfur.** The GOS and the rebel groups must recognize that there can be no military solution to the Darfur conflict. Fighting between the JEM rebels and the Sudanese armed forces in Omdurman last month illustrate the

need for a new round of inclusive peace talks to resolve the crisis in Darfur. Yet, a new round of negotiations without support from key rebel leaders would likely suffer the same fate as those held in Sirte, Libya. Political pressure is needed to urge the rebel leaders who failed to participate in the Libya talks to attend a new round of negotiations.

Moreover, lack of coordination in diplomatic efforts with the GOS and rebel groups has undermined the international community's effectiveness in building support for a political solution and coalescing the rebel groups behind a common set of demands. We support the appointment of a full-time joint chief mediator to ensure the international community mediates with the parties using one voice. Yet, while better coordination is needed, the U.S. must remain focused on the end goal—a new round of negotiations to end the violence in Darfur. Please urge your special envoy Richard Williamson to help jump-start a new round of inclusive peace talks, and provide him with the necessary support staff and resources to sustain negotiations until an agreement is reached.

***Organize a donor meeting to shore up logistical resources and necessary personnel to support a robust and fully staffed peacekeeping mission in Darfur.** The Darfur region of Sudan is rife with insecurity. We laud your decision to support the authorization of the UN-AU hybrid peacekeeping mission in Darfur (UNAMID). Unfortunately, UNAMID has not received the necessary equipment and personnel to ensure the safety of civilians in Darfur. We urge you to organize a donor meeting with Security Council members, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the “friends of UNAMID” working group, and troop contributing countries to ensure UNAMID is fully resourced to protect civilians and address security challenges in Darfur.

***Increase U.S. funding for humanitarian needs and sustainable development throughout Sudan.** Approximately half of all peace agreements collapse within five years. Substantial and sustained post-conflict assistance is one of the most important tools employed by the international community to prevent a resurgence of conflict in war-torn societies. Despite substantial assistance pledges from international donors, facts on the ground demonstrate the need for increased funding to address overwhelming humanitarian and development needs throughout Sudan.

We urge you to dramatically increase and maintain high levels of U.S. funding for humanitarian needs in Darfur, as well as both humanitarian and development needs in Southern Sudan and the Transitional areas. Increased U.S. funding for humanitarian needs and development assistance will help meet urgent needs and build a strong peace incentive, in both Darfur and Southern Sudan.

Mr. President, the window to help bring peace and security to Sudan is closing. Four years ago, then Secretary of State Colin Powell stated that violence in Darfur amounted to genocide. Three years ago, former U.S. special envoy Jack Danforth helped negotiate an end to the North-South conflict—the longest running civil war in Africa. Now, the entire country is on the brink of prolonged war.

Violence and war has plagued Sudan for far too long. The above steps are necessary to help chart a path towards peace and stability. We urge you to take immediate action to support a more peaceful and just future for Sudan.

Sincerely,

Africa Action
Africa Faith & Justice Network
American Islamic Congress
American Jewish World Service
Better World Campaign
Citizens for Global Solutions
Darfur Rehabilitation Project, Inc.
ENOUGH: A project to end genocide and crimes against humanity
Ethiopian Community Development Council
Fellowship of Reconciliation
Friends Committee on National Legislation (Quakers)
Genocide Intervention Network
Global Ministries of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and United Church of Christ
Humanity United
Jewish Council for Public Affairs
Jubilee Campaign USA
Lutheran World Relief
Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns
Mennonite Central Committee U.S. Washington Office
National Council of Jewish Women
Physicians for Human Rights
Presbyterian Church (USA), Washington Office
Resolve Uganda
Salam Sudan Foundation
Save Darfur Coalition
STAND: A Student Anti-Genocide Coalition
Sudan Advocacy Action Forum
TransAfrica Forum
Union for Reform Judaism
United Church of Christ, Justice and Witness Ministries
United Methodist Church, General Board of Church and Society
Week of Compassion, Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)

Cc: U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice
U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Jendayi Frazer
U.S. Special Envoy to Sudan Richard Williamson