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Secure the Deployment of a UN Peacekeeping Force to Stop the Genocide in Darfur

The genocide in Darfur, western Sudan, has been raging for four years. An international intervention is urgently needed to stop the violence, provide protection to civilians and humanitarian operations, and create stable conditions that can facilitate a peace process. The U.S. must do everything necessary to secure the immediate deployment of a United Nations (UN) peacekeeping force, authorized by UN Security Council Resolution 1706, to stop the genocide and protect civilians and humanitarian efforts in Darfur.

The Sudanese government, particularly through its proxy “Janjaweed” militias, continues to orchestrate attacks against civilians in Darfur. The currently deployed African Union (AU) force has struggled to maintain security in the region, lacking the manpower and the mandate to succeed at this task. There is an international consensus that the AU must be supplemented by a larger UN peacekeeping force that can protect civilians and aid operations on the ground. In addition to worsening violence in Darfur, the humanitarian crisis that forms part of the genocide is escalating. Recent estimates from the UN place the number of conflict-affected people in Darfur and eastern Chad at almost 4.5 million. More than 1 million of these people are now entirely without humanitarian access. At the same time, aid operations are being forced to curtail their efforts as a result of growing insecurity. The U.S. remains the only government to have publicly acknowledged that what is happening in Darfur constitutes genocide. The U.S. has provided generous humanitarian aid in Darfur, and it has engaged in efforts to support the peace process. But its actions remain wholly inadequate in response to genocide, and it has not pursued a successful strategy to protect people in Darfur.

The passage of UN Security Council Resolution 1706 in August 2006 marked an important step, authorizing more than 20,000 UN peacekeepers for Darfur. But the deployment of this force is now stalled in the face of Sudanese government opposition, and there is no clarity on the Bush Administration’s plan to break the current deadlock.

As the genocide continues in Darfur, the U.S. must:

- Step up the pressure on the Sudanese government to challenge its opposition to the authorized UN peacekeeping force and to secure its consent for UN deployment.
- Expend the necessary diplomatic capital to gain Chinese and Russian cooperation in advancing the international goal of a peacekeeping force that can protect Darfur.
- Through hearings and personal contact, Members of Congress should actively pressure officials in the White House and State Department to take new action on Darfur.
- Continue to fund humanitarian and peacekeeping operations on the ground. As Congress begins to hold hearings on the 2007 supplemental and 2008 budget requests, efforts must be made to augment the proposed levels of humanitarian and food aid, and peacekeeping assistance, currently at \$362 million in 2007 for Darfur and Southern Sudan.
- Contribute diplomatically to a peace process that engages all parties to the conflict.

For more information contact Diana Duarte, Program Associate for Policy Analysis & Communications, Africa Action, 1634 Eye Street NW, #810, Washington, DC 20006
Tel: (202) 546-7961 -- Fax: (202) 546-1545 diana@africaaction.org <http://www.africaaction.org>