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DEMOCRATIC POLICY COMMITTEE

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-4904

Senator Richard Lugar, Chairman
U.S. Senate Committee on Foreign Relations
Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510-6225

November 16, 2006

Dear Chairman Lugar,

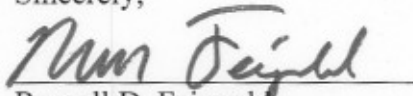
In light of recent devastating developments in Sudan and the rapid deterioration of conditions on the ground in Darfur, we urge you to hold a hearing before the full Foreign Relations Committee to revitalize discussions on what must be done to avert further tragedy there.

By now we are all aware of the scale of violence and devastation that has befallen the innocent people in Sudan's Darfur region. With more than 200,000 killed and an estimated 2.5 million innocent civilians forcibly displaced already, the recent upsurge in insecurity is resulting in hundreds of new deaths and thousands of additional refugees. Just yesterday, newspapers around the world reported that dozens of civilians were killed and wounded in an unprovoked attack by Khartoum-backed Janjaweed militia on several villages in western Darfur. Chad and the Central African Republic have also seen increased aggression by rebel militias within their borders, which they claim are being backed and encouraged by the Sudanese government.

The U.S. government declared the violence in Darfur to be Genocide more than two years ago, due in large part to pressure from this body. American concern regarding the escalating violence in Darfur has grown as awareness spreads. An editorial in Saturday's *Washington Post* spoke for many U.S. citizens in urging the U.S. government to "assemble commitments of peacekeeping troops and call Sudan's bluff." Indeed, as people around the world look to the United States for leadership at this critical time, it is essential that this body participate in the development of a robust and realistic response to Khartoum's belligerence.

It is with the utmost respect that we entreat you to convene a full committee hearing to reaffirm our commitment to a coordinated U.S. government response in the face of horrendous violence and human rights violations. As stated in this weekend's editorial, "If there is no solution in Darfur, the world will witness Darfur-like atrocities elsewhere on a scale appalling to imagine." We must not sit by while the first genocide of the 21st century escalates into a horrific humanitarian catastrophe. We sincerely appreciate your attention to this issue and consideration of this appeal.

Sincerely,


Russell D. Feingold
United States Senator


Mel Martinez
United States Senator

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