

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

December 10, 2008

Dear President-Elect Obama:

Sixty years ago this week, in the direct aftermath of reprehensible acts of genocide, the United Nations General Assembly gathered in Paris to adopt the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, a document intended to clarify the international consensus on the most fundamental rights of human beings. Forty-eight nations approved this seminal document, and in the decades since its adoption, the world has seen the birth of dozens of new democracies, which have in turn adopted its principles. Among them: the rights to life, liberty, and security of person.

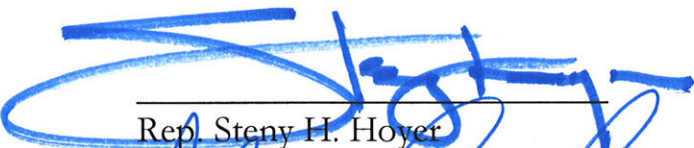
Sixty years later, despite growing international support for these core ideals, we see their flagrant violation playing out in many places around the world. We write today about one such place: Darfur, Sudan. We are all tragically familiar with the numbers – 300,000 dead; 2.5 million displaced. Likewise, we know the words all too well: devils on horseback, genocide, refugee, orphan. And sadly, we recognize the apathy that has plagued the international community in the face of these grave injustices.

In April 2007, we traveled together to Darfur, to see first-hand the crisis unfolding there, and to explore responses by the United States and the international community. Upon our return, we issued recommendations, many of which are still, sadly, relevant -- due to worldwide passivity in the face of this crisis. The paper we submit to you today includes a series of recommendations, some familiar and some new, for your consideration. Our goals remain steadfast: the United States must show leadership in advancing the peace process, we must work to ensure continued humanitarian access, we must help peacekeepers do their job more effectively, and we must engage the rest of the world.

We applaud your stated commitment to addressing the crisis in Darfur, and we hope these recommendations serve as the beginning of a dialogue between us on this important issue. Certainly, there is much hard work to be done, and the United States cannot do it alone. But with renewed American leadership, we hope that the people of Darfur will once again know that the basic principles adopted in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights – that “all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights” and that we are “endowed with reason and conscience and should act

towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood”— apply to them and *protect them*. Those words are a solemn promise, and we look forward to working with you to ensure that they are applied to the people of Darfur.

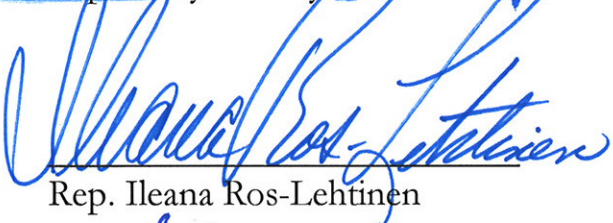
Respectfully submitted,



Rep. Steny H. Hoyer



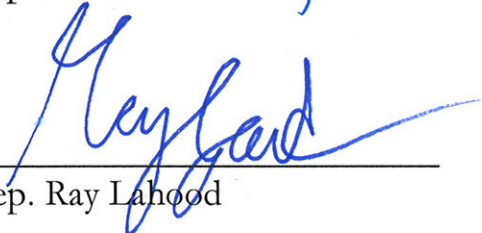
Rep. Barbara Lee



Rep. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen



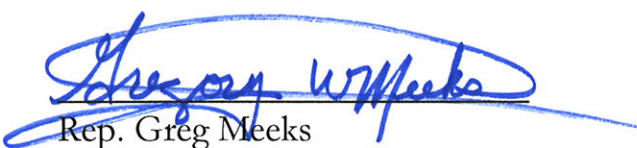
Rep. Bob Goodlatte



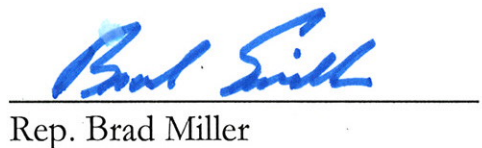
Rep. Ray Lahood



Rep. Jerry Moran



Rep. Greg Meeks



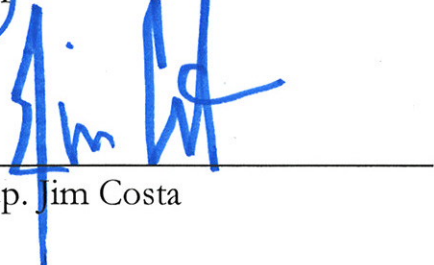
Rep. Brad Miller



Rep. G.K. Butterfield



Rep. John Barrow



Rep. Jim Costa

GOAL 1: REINVIGORATE THE PEACE PROCESS

- **Recommendation A:** In our ongoing discussions on Darfur, there was one recommendation repeated more than any other: the world needs real American leadership to reinvigorate the peace process. We encourage you to appoint a full-time senior-level envoy to lead the charge on a new round of peace talks. He or she should be knowledgeable about the region's political dynamics and familiar with the relevant cultural sensitivities. He or she should be supported by a strong team of experts and Foreign Service Officers. Ambassador John Danforth's courageous leadership in the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) negotiations was often cited as a successful model.
- **Recommendation B:** Although much effort went into making the 2006 Darfur Peace Agreement (DPA) talks successful, the DPA ultimately failed as a consensus document due to the number of non-signatories. We recommend that you consider promoting an alternative model for any new negotiations and peace agreement, given the DPA's negative brand among certain key stakeholders.
- **Recommendation C:** Arranging peace talks will be logistically burdensome and costly. In recognition of this challenge, we recommend that adequate resources be devoted to logistical support – to ensure the security of meeting locations, assist participants with travel and accommodations, etc.
- **Recommendation D:** One of the biggest challenges to any peace talks will be identifying who needs to be at the table. The power centers in Darfur shift continually and there is frequent splintering of militant groups. As you begin to identify participants, we recommend that you try to also select representatives from Darfuri civil society, including key tribal leaders.

GOAL 2: ENSURE CONTINUED HUMANITARIAN ACCESS

- **Recommendation A:** As dire as the statistics are, the situation in Darfur would be even worse were it not for the courageous work of humanitarian organizations providing basic services to the people of the region. We recommend that you conduct an immediate assessment of the eroding humanitarian conditions on the ground in Darfur, taking into account the shortages in World Food Programme rations, the deteriorating security situation in Darfur's 154 Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) camps, etc.

- **Recommendation B:** The top concern of the humanitarian community in Darfur is the eroding security situation. Humanitarian organizations have experienced a notable uptick in murders, overall banditry and theft, and especially vehicle hijackings. In order to improve the security environment and enable these groups to continue their operations, we recommend that you request that peacekeepers:
 - I. Institute security perimeters around the IDP camps, so that IDPs can safely gather firewood, work the fields outside camp walls, travel to local markets, etc.
 - II. Establish permanent posts and conduct regular policing inside camps – especially at night and on foot.
 - III. Police widely traveled routes and flashpoints, which are well-established in the region.

- **Recommendation C:** Like many other dictatorial governments, the Khartoum regime impedes humanitarian operations by imposing significant bureaucratic impediments on employees of humanitarian organizations – including visa and work permit delays. We recommend that you keep the pressure on Khartoum to reduce bureaucratic hurdles and abide by both the letter and the spirit of the Joint Communiqué on Humanitarian Access, in which Khartoum promised to “support, protect and facilitate humanitarian operations in Darfur.”

GOAL 3: HELP THE PEACEKEEPERS DO THEIR JOBS

- **Recommendation A:** On July 31, 2007, the United Nations Security Council approved Resolution 1769, under Chapter VII of the UN Charter, establishing a hybrid African Union/United Nations peacekeeping force for Darfur, referred to as UNAMID. Full deployment of the force, in the UN’s own words, “has been hampered by lack of cooperation from the Government of Sudan, delays in the readiness of troop and police contributors to deploy, the prohibitive environment, and the immense logistical challenges inherent to Darfur.” We recommend that you meet early on with United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon, who maintains that Darfur is a top priority for him and the United Nations, to discuss these implementation challenges, urge him to reaffirm the civilian protection mandate in Resolution 1769, and clarify rules of engagement for peacekeepers.

- **Recommendation B:** At full strength, UNAMID will have almost 20,000 troops and more than 6,000 police; however, barely half are currently in place. We recommend that you encourage further troop contributions in your meetings with foreign counterparts, particularly leaders of Arab states. For the African states who have long had troops in Darfur, we must all express our gratitude and support for their continued sacrifice.
- **Recommendation C:** UNAMID continues to face shortfalls in critical transport and aviation assets, particularly helicopters. We recommend that you help UNAMID find the 24 helicopters it desperately needs (18 transport and six tactical), and that you consider approaching the following countries that have known assets: Ukraine, China, Russia, Czech Republic, India, Italy, Spain, Netherlands, Romania and Slovakia.
- **Recommendation D:** In keeping with Recommendation 2(B) above, we recommend that you call on UNAMID to carry out more robust and regular policing programs, especially in and around camps. UNAMID must be reminded of its civilian protection mandate.
- **Recommendation E:** UNAMID's role cannot and should not be restricted to policing. Indeed, UNAMID would benefit from greater public support. We recommend that you encourage UNAMID to work with local actors on infrastructure projects – including building roads, bridges, and hospitals -- in order to benefit the public good and improve public confidence in UNAMID.
- **Recommendation F:** We recommend that you encourage UNAMID to further build public trust by establishing community liaisons at camps. These posts should be permanently staffed and should provide a forum for clear and regular communication.

GOAL 4: ENGAGE OUTSIDE ACTORS

- **Recommendation A:** There is no country besides the United States with greater potential for positive impact on Darfur than China. Beijing has \$8 billion invested in Sudan's oil industry, and thus a direct incentive for advancing stability country-wide. While we appreciate China's appointment of a Special Envoy for Darfur and recognize China's contributions to UNAMID, we recommend that you increase the pressure on China to do more on Darfur, particularly when it comes

to restarting the peace process, and that you raise this at the highest levels of the U.S.-China dialogue.

- **Recommendation B:** We also need much more sustained pressure on Sudan's neighbors and friends to advance the peace process, ensure continued humanitarian access, and rebuild Sudan. We recommend that you raise the issue of Darfur in high-level discussions with Egypt and other members of the Arab League. The recent rapprochement between the governments of Chad and Sudan is also noteworthy and should be nurtured.

GOAL 5: KEEP A CLOSE EYE ON SOUTHERN SUDAN

- **Recommendation A:** The 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA), which ended decades of bloody civil war between North and South Sudan, has been appropriately elevated as a model for the Darfur peace process – making its full implementation critical. We recommend that you stress continued implementation of the CPA through reinvigorated monitoring and accountability efforts, including:
 - I. Acceptance and endorsement of the Abyei Boundaries Commission (ABC) report.
 - II. Complete disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of militias and other armed groups.
- **Recommendation B:** We recommend that you continue to support and devote resources to transparency and anti-corruption programs. We must remain steadfast in our commitment to reconstruction, transitional justice and conflict resolution projects in this recovering region.
- **Recommendation C:** Like in Darfur, Khartoum imposes significant bureaucratic impediments on humanitarian organizations operating in the South. We recommend that you push for application of Joint Communiqué on Humanitarian Access Sudan-wide, to ensure a basic set of rules that will allow humanitarian organizations to work effectively. And, in turn, Khartoum will have to be held accountable for following both the letter and the spirit of the Communiqué.

CONCLUSION

In closing, we leave you with three final recommendations. First, we encourage you to approach the issue of Darfur with a broad perspective. Any strategy for this troubled area should be developed in the context of regional politics and conflict resolution, for this particular conflict is sadly familiar and continually spreading. Indeed, we hope to see a greater overall emphasis on stabilization and democratic and economic development in the Horn of Africa, and on the continent writ large. Second, the issue of No Fly Zones has been hotly debated for years. We recognize that there are strong arguments both for and against, and we encourage you to proceed cautiously on this front. It is essential that we carefully consider the views of stakeholders on all sides of this issue, including those promoting compromise. Finally, we note that the threat of the pending International Criminal Court arrest warrant for General Bashir provides unique leverage over him, which should be used to achieve concrete actions and commitments from him to end the genocide.