

January 30, 2006

H.E. Mr. John R. Bolton
Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary
Permanent U.S. Representative to the United Nations
140 East 45th Street
New York, NY 10017

Dear Ambassador Bolton,

As members of the Darfur advocacy community, we are writing to urge you to use the opportunity of the U.S. presidency of the United Nations (UN) Security Council next month to introduce a new resolution to address the deteriorating situation in Darfur, Sudan.

We share the growing concern recently expressed by senior U.S. and UN officials about the crisis in Darfur and the need for an expanded security presence to protect civilians and humanitarian operations. There is an emerging consensus that an international intervention is required to reinforce the African Union (AU) mission, and that the UN should pursue plans for a multinational force for Darfur.

As President of the Security Council in February 2006, the U.S. will have a unique opportunity to assert international leadership and obtain action on Darfur. Specifically, we urge you to draft and introduce a resolution that would "re-hat" the African Union (AU) mission in Darfur as a UN operation, granting it a strong mandate to protect civilians and humanitarian operations, and authorize a UN force to be deployed as soon as possible to the region.

Such an international intervention is essential to serve four main purposes: (1) Stop the killings, rapes and pillaging in Darfur; (2) Provide security to facilitate humanitarian assistance programs for internally displaced people (IDPs) and refugees; (3) Enforce the African Union cease-fire between the Khartoum government and the rebel groups in Darfur to allow meaningful political negotiations to move forward in Abuja, Nigeria, and (4) Facilitate the voluntary return of IDPs to their land and the reconstruction of their homes by providing a secure environment.

A UN resolution to "re-hat" the AU in Darfur and to authorize a larger multinational intervention can effectively address the crisis in Darfur. Previous examples of successful cooperation between African regional bodies as "first responders" to crises and the UN as reinforcement include peacekeeping operations in Sierra Leone, Liberia and Burundi. These precedents show that, with proper planning and coordination, a UN intervention in support of an African mission can act as a deterrent to violence and as a catalyst for successful peace talks.

We feel that February offers an especially critical moment for U.S. leadership on the crisis in Darfur. The U.S. has already shown important leadership on Darfur by publicly acknowledging that genocide is occurring, by granting humanitarian assistance, and by investing diplomatic support in the peace talks. However, the most important immediate priority is providing protection to the people of Darfur, and U.S. leadership is needed to ensure UN action on this priority now.

As you know, the Administration faces growing public pressure for action to stop the genocide in Darfur. By acting now to introduce and gain passage of such a resolution at the UN Security Council, the U.S. would fulfill these calls for leadership in the face of the first genocide of the 21st century by providing the physical protection needed to save thousands of lives.

We look forward to your action on this priority in the coming days.

Yours sincerely,

Africa Action
Africa Faith & Justice Network
African Services Committee

American Jewish World Service
Armenian National Committee of America
Coalition for International Justice
Darfur Centre for Human Rights & Development
Darfur Peace & Development
Dear Sudan, Love, Marin
Food for the Hungry
Franciscans International
Friends Committee on National Legislation (Quakers)
Genocide Intervention Network
Global Grassroots
Northwest Medical Teams International
Parliamentary Brief
Physicians for Human Rights
Pittsburgh Darfur Emergency Coalition
Presbyterian Church, (USA), Washington Office
Save Darfur Coalition
Sojourners
TransAfrica Forum
Unitarian Universalist Service Committee
United Methodist Church, General Board of Church and Society
Washington State Africa Network