

Sudan

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have the moral authority to go into a country to save the lives of millions of people," says Rep. Charles Rangel (D-N.Y.), who was arrested for trespassing while protesting outside the Sudan Embassy July 13.

"And I am certain that by doing this, America will once again have light and a beacon to shine, to have some people to believe that we don't just care about oil, but we're concerned about life."

Sudan is a Muslim nation with a long history of ethnic strife. The current bloodbaths date back to early last year when two non-Muslim rebel groups, the Sudan Liberation Movement/Army and the Justice and Equality Movement, attacked government military installations in protest of raids by the government-backed Janjaweed (armed men on horses). This is an army of about 20,000 who are attacking, raping and killing non-Muslim civilians in the Darfur region.

An Amnesty International report released this month says, "In these attacks, men are killed, women are raped and villagers are forcibly displaced from their homes which are burnt; their crops and cattle, their main means of subsistence, are burnt or looted."

At least 1.2 million persons have been displaced and more than 170,000 have taken refuge across the border, the Amnesty report states. More than 2 million people have died either by violence, disease or other war-related impacts over the past decade, according to Globalsecurity.org.

African-Americans have a special role to play, Rangel says.

"We should never forget that in many of our lifetimes, Blacks were murdered, were lynched, were mutilated. And it wasn't just the world that was silent. It was the United States of America that was silent. It was our churches that were silent. It was our synagogues that were silent," he says. "This is a chance to say, 'No matter how small it was, if I talked with my rabbi, if I talked with my priest, if I called my Congressman, if I just screamed out loud and said don't let these people die, it's doing something.'"

Heads of U. S. organizations that advocate for Africa do not all agree on a certain approach, but believe that something must be done quickly to save lives.

"While it's important for us to keep the pressure on the Sudanese government and make it clear that we are not accepting their rhetoric, the pressure that we have to really bring to bear is on the U. S. government — the Bush administration — because they could be doing something right now," says TransAfrica President Bill Fletcher. "The United States needs to go to the United Nations with a very strong Security Council resolution that mandates the deployment of peace keepers in the Darfur region to guarantee respect for the cease fire, humanitarian assistance for the people and return of refugees."

Among the suggested actions for citizens to pressure the government:

- First become educated about the conflict. "If you're ignorant, you're subject to the okey-doke," says Mel Foote, president of Constituency for Africa. He has issued several reports on the conflict that can be obtained at <http://www.cfanet.org/>.

- Email, write or call the White House (President@Whitehouse.gov, 202-456-1414), www.Whitehouse.gov; members of Congress (www.senate.gov or www.house.gov); or the Sudan Embassy at 202-338-8565 info@sudanembassy.org.

- Get involved in protests on the issue, such as the frequent noon rallies outside the Sudan Embassy, 2210

Massachusetts Avenue, N.W. Joia Nuri, a spokeswoman for Christian Solidarity International, the group organizing the arrest campaign, says the high profile arrests will continue until significant action is taken to stop the killings. She can be reached at 301-920-0670.

- Americans can also help by asking their religious leaders to get involved in sending humanitarian aid to the country directly or through humanitarian organizations such as USAID.

Not everyone agrees military intervention is the answer. "The peace process itself is moving along very fine. They're close to being in agreement," says Foote. "If they're making all this progress, don't you think we ought to be encouraging this progress? But, no. Here we are talking about the Khartoum government has got horns on their heads."

Foote says there is little likelihood that the U. S. will intervene militarily in the Sudan, noting that the U. S. military is already involved in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Former U. S. Sen. John Danforth (R-Mo.), the U. S. Ambassador to the United Nations, says the administration is making progress.

"The parties have agreed on a framework for peace, ending a decades-long North-South civil war. And that is a major achievement," Danforth said at his White House swearing in July 1.

In an NNPA interview, Dansforth, who accompanied Secretary of State Colin Powell to Sudan this month, says they gave strong ultimatums.

"We've told the government of Sudan that it has to do four things: That it has to stop the violence, that it has to cooperate to get humanitarian assistance to the people of Darfur. It has to cooperate with the African Union to help monitor the situation. Finally, the government has to enter into talks with the rebels in Darfur to solve the political differences," Danforth says. "We've told the government of Sudan that unless they take those steps, we will move forward with a resolution in the UN Security Council ... It would require the council to consider sanctions on the government if the government does not immediately comply to take the steps it needs to take on Darfur. It would endorse the African Union monitoring efforts in Darfur and also encourage the African Union to help to deploy troops to Darfur to help protect the civilians there."

Others say the tough talk is a waste of time.

"The point is to get the U. S. Government to recognize that this is genocide. This is a unique crime against humanity and we have a moral and legal obligation to respond," says Salih Booker, executive director of the Washington, D.C.-based Africa Action. He has headed a petition drive with more than 26,000 signatures, pushing for U. S. military intervention among other actions. The petition was delivered to Powell by the CBC last week.

"We can't just leave it to the Sudanese government because they are the authors of this crime. And so the U. S. needs to lead and cooperate with African countries and the African Union to create an international force that can go to the Darfur region, stop the immediate killing and provide protection and security to the people," Booker says. "It would have to be a military force."

Rangel predicts the protests will grow in coming weeks.

"I just left the Democratic Caucus and they said as a result of my arrest that they wanted to join with us in getting arrested," he says. "More importantly than all of this is to set the moral tone to let everybody in the United States and the world know that if these million people die, that the blood is on our hands because we could have done something."

A), which opened in Kenya in 2002, aims at ending Africa's longest war, spanning 21 years. More than two million people have died and over four million have been displaced by the war.

The negotiations, under the auspices of Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD), are in their last phase, discussing details of security arrangements. After this, they will embark on a final round, which will involve compiling the six protocols — that they have agreed upon — into one document. This document will then form the basis of a comprehensive peace agreement.

IGAD comprises Kenya, Uganda, Somalia, Djibouti, Sudan, Ethiopia and Eritrea.

Media

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cally stagnant."

Some 30 years ago, President Lyndon Johnson created the Kerner Commission to investigate the causes of the riots that consumed many U.S. cities in the early 1960s. Its findings included an extended critique of the media that continues to resonate today.

"The media," it said, "report and write from the standpoint of a White man's world ... 'the White press' — a press that repeatedly, if unconsciously, reflects the biases, the paternalism, the indifference of White America. This may be understandable, but it is not excusable in an institution that has the mission to inform and educate the whole of our society."

"The media industry is fundamentally flawed by the lack of diversity in the staffs of newspapers, TV and radio, Gonzalez declared in his speech. Two historic studies have equated quality journalism with diversity of both staff and story," he added.

"One was the Kerner Commission. The other was the Hutchins Commission of 1947. Also called the 'Report of the Commission on Freedom of the Press,' it was the first attempt at an in-depth analysis of the role of the mass media in U.S. society."

When completed, the Hutchins Commission included five guidelines that, Gonzalez noted, would become the hallmarks of good journalism.

He highlighted the third, which says, "the media has the responsibility for the projection of a representative picture for the constituent groups in a society."

The commission also emphasized that "when the images (that the members of the press) portray fail to present a social group, truly they tend to pervert judgement."

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Regional Transportation Commission of Southern Nevada

Uniform Standard Specifications for Public Works' Construction Offsite Improvements, Clark County Area, Nevada

Section 623, "Traffic Signals and Street Lighting" of the Uniform Standard Specifications and Drawing Nos. 313, 320, 321, 325, 502, 503, 504, and 505 of Volume I of the Uniform Standard Drawings for Public Works' Construction Offsite Improvements, Clark County Area, Nevada have been revised by the Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) of Southern Nevada. The revisions to the section and drawings listed above were approved by the RTC on July 8, 2004 and will become effective on **August 1, 2004**. Please refer to the RTC website at www.rtcsonthernnevada.com for the specific changes made to the specification. If you desire a printed copy of the revision, you may pick it up at no cost from our offices at 600 South Grand Central Parkway, Monday through Friday between 8:00 AM and 5:00 PM. If you have any questions, please contact the RTC at (702) 676-1500. Published: Las Vegas Sentinel-Voice—07/29/04

Rape

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the SLA and JEM to the negotiating table. The rebels refused to hold talks with the government until their demands were met.

These demands include disarming the militias and prosecuting war criminals.

Another visit to the region by UN Secretary General Kofi Annan early this month also highlighted the growing concerns about Darfur. Annan noted that the ongoing peace talks to end a separate conflict in the south would be jeopardized if they failed to address the Darfur war.

The talks between the Islamic regime in Khartoum and the rebel Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/

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