

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

June 4, 2004

The President  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW  
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

We are writing to express our deepest concern with regard to the humanitarian crisis in Darfur, Sudan, and to urge you to take immediate action to put an end to the crisis. At least 10,000 civilians, perhaps as many as 30,000, have been murdered in direct Sudanese militia attacks. Wholesale destruction of villages, food production and storage facilities, the dislocation of populations and the denial of outside assistance have all set the conditions for widespread famine and disease. Some 350,000 civilians, mostly women, children and the elderly, are likely to die this year, absent swift and effective international intervention.

In an April 8 ceasefire with Darfur insurgents, the Government of Sudan promised to cease attacks on civilians by its military and by the closely associated "janjaweed" militias, yet the attacks have continued. The Government of Sudan also committed to providing immediate access for humanitarian aid and workers, yet through bureaucratic manipulation of visa requirements, the regime continues to deny access to Darfur. These delays are completely unacceptable and potentially catastrophic. Unless there is meaningful access for humanitarian workers and supplies in Darfur before the end of this month, seasonal rains will isolate Darfur from the outside world for months, and widespread deaths from famine and disease will occur, under the supervision and with the tacit approval of Sudanese authorities.

Over one million Muslim civilians of African descent are now displaced by Sudanese-sponsored attacks on their villages and are living in desperate, life-threatening conditions, some in refugee camps in neighboring Chad, but most in camps in Darfur organized by the Government of Sudan. Many of them will die there, over the course of this year and the next, unless the United States and the world community intervene immediately.

On May 26, the United Nations Security Council issued a statement on Darfur, endorsing the April 8 cease-fire, condemning Khartoum's human rights violations and calling for international monitors. In the current circumstances, however, this measure does not go far enough. UN Secretary General Kofi Annan has warned that there is a risk of genocide occurring in Darfur. Unless the international community, prompted by American leadership, intervenes, we risk

repeating the horrible mistakes of 1994, when the world stood aside in the face of genocide in Rwanda.

We therefore urge your Administration to provide, in the month of June, the substantive initiatives and visible leadership necessary to encourage wavering national governments and multilateral bodies to put an end to the crisis in Darfur. The United States and the international community must compel the Government of Sudan to provide immediate access to Darfur for humanitarian aid and workers and for international observers, to immediately halt attacks against civilians, and to put in place a political process for the resolution of grievances between Muslims of African descent in Darfur and the government in Khartoum.

Among the opportunities to raise these initiatives is the June 8-11 G-8 Summit at Sea Island, Georgia. Given your intention to use the Sea Island event to promote the Greater Middle East Initiative for reform in the region, it would be unacceptable not to also address the tragedy in Darfur. Given the presence of African and Middle Eastern heads of state, along with the members of the G-8, the Summit represents a particularly valuable opportunity to mobilize action among countries in the region as well as among our allies.

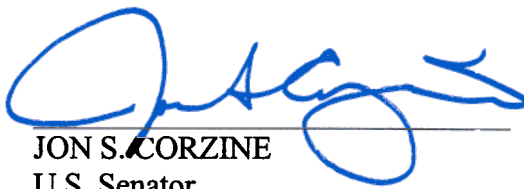
At the same time, your Administration should exercise the strongest possible leadership in the United Nations, with a view to engaging that body, as well as the European Union and the African Union, vigorously and immediately in support of: 1) the establishment of immediate humanitarian access to Darfur, via either the cooperation of Khartoum or, in the case of non-cooperation, the development of UN options for armed protection of emergency aid distribution under Chapter VII; 2) Chapter VII authority to establish a no-fly zone, to forestall Khartoum's air attacks on civilians or to authorize a military mission to enforce the existing cease-fire between the Sudanese government and Darfur-based rebel groups (note in this regard that French military bases already exist in neighboring Chad); 3) the outline of an internationally supported and credible peace process; and 4) the establishment under Article VII of an investigative tribunal to examine the extent of and responsibility for large-scale human rights violations in Darfur.

It is also vital that the signing of the May 26 agreement, under U.S. and international auspices, to end the long-standing conflict between Khartoum and non-Muslim insurgents in the South of Sudan not deflect attention from the crisis in Darfur or from the complicity of the Government of Sudan in the attacks against civilians there. Indeed, the ability of Khartoum to re-direct aircraft and troops from the South to Darfur indicates the need for increased vigilance and engagement by the world community.

Given the similarities between the anti-civilian, scorched-earth tactics employed by the Sudanese government in the South and now in Darfur, it is especially important that any recognition of the May 26 agreement be balanced with demands that Khartoum abide by its commitments on Darfur.

Finally, your Administration should neither organize any White House ceremony to recognize the May 26 agreement nor take any steps to lift existing economic sanctions or to normalize relations with Sudan unless the attacks in Darfur have ceased and humanitarian workers and international observers have been granted full access, and unless a credible process for the resolution of grievances and the establishment of permanent peace in Darfur is in place.

Sincerely,



JON S. CORZINE  
U.S. Senator



FRANK LAUTENBERG  
U.S. Senator

CC: Colin L. Powell  
Secretary of State