

April 29, 2009

The President

The White House

Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

Thank you for your strong statements in support of peace in Sudan and for your condemnation of the recent expulsion of international aid organizations from Darfur. In light of this recent event, I urge you to expedite your Administration's policy review on the situation in Darfur and do all that you can to get humanitarian aid groups operating back in Darfur.

As you know, since February 2003, the Sudanese government supported militia, the Janjaweed, have waged attacks on civilians living in Darfur. As a result, nearly 2.45 million people have been displaced and 450,000 men, women, and children have lost their lives. In July 2004, the U.S. Congress declared the atrocities in Darfur genocide.

The situation in Darfur has become even more dire recently. On March 4, 2009, the International Criminal Court issued an arrest warrant for Sudanese President Omar Hassan al-Bashir. In response, al-Bashir expelled 13 international and three local humanitarian aid groups. While some international aid groups were allowed to return to Darfur this month, they are now overwhelmed dealing with a meningitis outbreak in the area.

While the war in Darfur rages on, it is critical that Darfurians have access to international assistance. Completion of your Administration's policy review will no doubt further this goal.

Sincerely,

Louise M. Slaughter

Member of Congress

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