

Talking Points: Dream for Darfur Olympic Torch Relay

Why China is critical

- As China prepares to host the Olympics – a powerful symbol of international peace and brotherhood – it is failing to help end genocide in Darfur, one of the world's worst humanitarian crises.
- China has significant economic, military, and political relationships with Sudan. It sells arms to the government of Sudan and underwrites the regime in Khartoum by purchasing approximately 70 percent of the country's oil exports.
- China has served as a diplomatic shield for the Sudanese government. It watered down U.N. efforts to deploy the robust peacekeeping force outlined in Security Council Resolution 1706. A year later, during its presidency of the U.N. Security Council, China fought to weaken Resolution 1769, which authorizes deployment of a hybrid peacekeeping force in Darfur.
- Even as Sudan has continued to commit gross atrocities and violations of human rights in Darfur, Sino-Sudanese ties have continued to grow closer, as typified by the recent decision of the China National Petroleum Company (CNPC) to co-develop a large Sudanese offshore oil block and a pledge to rebuild the Presidential palace.

Role that China should play

- China must use its political, economic, and diplomatic power to put in place the agreement and mechanisms necessary to halt the massacre of Darfurians. Specifically, China must:
 - Use its position as a leading member of both the Security Council and the G-77 to push for swift recruitment and deployment of the peacekeeping mission authorized by Resolution 1769;
 - Publicly acknowledge the mass killings, human suffering, and displacement taking place in Darfur;
 - Show a willingness to bring economic pressure to bear on Khartoum in the form of sanctions in the event of non-compliance by the Khartoum regime;
 - Suspend all arms sales and military cooperation with Sudan until the atrocities there have ended;
 - Work with other countries to strengthen the political peace process being led by the AU and U.N. envoys, pressure all parties to participate in peace talks, and push the Sudanese government to negotiate a new peace agreement in good faith; and
 - Provide greater humanitarian assistance to Darfuri victims and ensure that the aid reaches them.

The relay is traveling across the United States

The Dream for Darfur Campaign launched its Olympic Torch Relay on August 9, 2007, one year before the 2008 Summer Olympic Games. The Torch Relay will coordinate events in the United States and around the world to urge China to use its unique influence on Sudan to protect civilians in Darfur. The U.S. torch relay begins in New York on September 9, 2007. It will then travel through more than 20 states, ending in December at the Chinese embassy in Washington. The U.S. relay is co-sponsored by Dream for Darfur, the Save Darfur Coalition, and STAND: A Student Anti-Genocide Coalition. The message is simple. "China Please: Bring the Olympic Dream to Darfur."

What you can do

- Sign the petition to President Hu calling on China to take urgent action for the people of Darfur. http://www.savedarfur.org/pages/sample_petition_to_president_hu
- Become a part of the Save Darfur community. Sign up for the Save Darfur Coalition's email list at www.savedarfur.org for regular updates and opportunities to take action.
- Write a letter to the editor of your local newspaper urging them to expose China's role in perpetuating the genocide in Darfur; or praise them for the coverage that they have already given to the subject, and encourage them to continue to shine a light on what China can do to end the genocide in Darfur.
- Join the divestment movement at DivestforDarfur.org and encourage investment firms to withdraw from companies that help fund genocide in Darfur.
- Tell President Bush and your representatives in Congress to work with the international community to prevent further delays in deploying peacekeeping troops to Darfur. Call 1-800-GENOCIDE to connect with the White House, members of Congress and other elected officials. Go to www.1800genocide.org for more info.