



## Legislative Update – May 17, 2007

### Lobbying your elected officials

Lobbying your elected officials is one of the most effective things you can do to help the people of Darfur, whether in person, via email, or over the phone. While every Senator and Representative will tell you that they are against genocide, what really matters is whether or not they are willing to do something about it. Take a moment to look over our current legislative priorities listed below, and help us let Congress know that you want them to do more to stop the genocide in Darfur. To contact your Representative and Senators, call the Capitol operator at (202) 224-3121 or go to [www.house.gov](http://www.house.gov) and [www.senate.gov](http://www.senate.gov) to find email information.

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### Current Legislative Priorities

Use this document as a guide when deciding which issues to discuss with your representative or his/her staff.

**TIP:** Check what committees your representative sits on, and tailor your “asks” accordingly. For example:

- ⇒ Funding Requests = Appropriations Committee
- ⇒ Divestment = Financial Services Committee
- ⇒ China = Foreign Affairs Committee
- ⇒ Genocide Accountability Act = Judiciary Committee

### Funding:

**Congress and the President must provide adequate funding for peacekeeping and humanitarian aid efforts in Darfur:** The U.S. is a key source of funding for both peacekeeping and humanitarian aid efforts in Darfur. Due to the changing nature and scope of the crisis, however, actual costs related to Darfur have often outpaced the projections, creating potential gaps in funding and the need for frequent emergency measures to address the shortfalls. Given the current costs of the AU peacekeepers already in Darfur, and the projected needs of the envisioned hybrid UN-AU force in Darfur, the President’s requests within the FY07 supplemental funding bill and the FY08 budget are woefully inadequate.

The President and Congress should therefore work together to provide at least \$186 million in additional funds for peacekeeping in Darfur, and \$6 billion for America’s core humanitarian assistance accounts in order to ensure the continued flow of humanitarian aid. It’s worth noting that while the increase in peacekeeping funds would go to specifically address Darfur’s unique peacekeeping needs, the increase in humanitarian accounts would help not only Darfur, but all similar humanitarian crises.

⇒ **ASK** your Senators and Representative to take steps to address these shortfalls within the FY08 appropriations process.

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### Divestment

**Congress should pass substantive legislation to support state’s rights to divest.** Over the last few years, a number of states and universities have chosen to divest their financial holdings from companies doing business with the Sudanese regime. Unfortunately, there is an effort underway to overturn some of these state divestment laws. Congress must therefore act to safeguard state’s rights to divest by passing federal divestment legislation. In the House, Rep. Barbara Lee has introduced H.R. 180, and in the Senate, Sen. Durbin has introduced S. 831, both of which take steps to protect divestment. While the intent of H.R. 180 is good – it would bar U.S. contracts from being awarded to companies helping to finance the genocide in Darfur – some final details still need to be negotiated, i.e. ensuring that the bill explicitly targets the optimal mix of companies. To find out if your Senators and Representative have cosponsored these bills, click [here for S. 831](#) and [here for H.R. 180](#).

⇒ **ASK** your Senators to cosponsor S. 831, and ask your Representative to work with Rep. Lee’s office to make H.R. 180 as strong as it should be.



## China

**Congress should pass resolution pressuring China to do more to end the genocide in Darfur.** As Sudan's top trading partner, and one of Sudan's biggest arms suppliers, China is uniquely positioned to influence the Sudanese regime. While China has taken some initial steps, there is much more that must be done to bring the full weight of Chinese diplomacy to bear in resolving the crisis in Darfur. The Senate has recently introduced S. Res. 203 and the House is expected to follow suit and introduce a similar resolution soon.

⇒ **ASK** your Senators to cosponsor S.Res.203, and your Representative to cosponsor the expected companion legislation in the House. asking for the Genocide Accountability Act to be brought up for consideration.

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## Genocide Accountability Act

**Congress should pass the Genocide Accountability Act:** In a bipartisan effort, the Senate passed the Genocide Accountability Act, S. 888, by unanimous consent on March 29. The bill now moves to the House, where it awaits action by the House Judiciary Committee. If passed by the House and signed by the President, the Genocide Accountability Act would ensure that all perpetrators of genocide, no matter where they are from or where their genocidal crimes were committed, could be tried in the U.S., closing an unfortunate loophole in current U.S. law. [Click here](#) to find out if your Representative is on the Judiciary Committee, and if so, please [send him or her an email](#)

⇒ **ASK** your Representative to support House passage of S. 888.

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## Additional Congressional Action

**Congress must conduct appropriate oversight of the Administration:** Congress must provide appropriate oversight of Administration efforts to address the crisis in Darfur in order to ensure that all facets of the federal government are working together properly, ensure that Darfur is being correctly prioritized within U.S. foreign policy, and to ensure that no opportunities for peace are missed for lack of resources. This oversight can come in the form of committee hearings, Dear Colleague sign-on letters, congressional delegation trips to Darfur and/or Chad, as well as private conversations with Administration officials. Oversight is also critical to guarantee that any sanctions which may be enacted as part of a package of "Plan B" measures are fully implemented. Given the complexity of many sanctions regimes, and the fact that many different agencies are typically involved cooperatively in their enforcement, Congress should make a special effort to ensure that all areas of the Administration are pulling their weight to make the sanctions effective.

⇒ **ASK** your Senators and Representative to exercise their oversight responsibilities to make sure that the U.S. government is doing all it should be to end the genocide in Darfur.

**Join the Sudan Caucus:** The Sudan Caucus is an informal bipartisan network of Representatives dedicated to ending the genocide in Darfur, co-chaired by Democratic Reps. Capuano and Payne, and Republican Reps. Wolf and Tancredo. As such, Sudan Caucus members are often the first to step forward and support important Darfur-related Congressional initiatives.

⇒ **ASK** your Representative to join the Sudan Caucus.

For more information:  
[www.savedarfur.org/pages/lobby\\_congress](http://www.savedarfur.org/pages/lobby_congress)  
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