

The Rt Hon William Hague MP, Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs  
The Honorable John F. Kerry, Secretary of State  
Senator the Hon Bob Carr, Minister for Foreign Affairs

Thursday, February 28 2013

Dear Mr. Hague, Senator Kerry, and Mr. Carr,

We appeal to you to act to halt atrocities that are once again occurring in Sudan.

Ten years ago, the Sudanese government launched military action against armed groups in Darfur that led to the deaths of over 300,000 Darfuris and displaced three million in what a UN Commission of Inquiry described as crimes against humanity. The U.S. Congress has since passed resolutions declaring this violence to be genocide and the International Criminal Court has indicted the President of Sudan. Despite attempts to broker peace, the root causes of the conflict remain unaddressed and the violence continues unabated. In 2013 alone, some 100 Darfuris have been killed and another 100,000 people displaced.

In an appalling repetition of history, the Sudanese government has spent the past 18 months deploying similar brutal tactics in a bid to crush an armed rebellion in another part of Sudan, this time Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile (Two Areas), where the Sudan People's Liberation Movement – North (SPLM-N) has taken up arms in protest at Khartoum's neglectful rule. Once again, civilians, mainly women and children, are caught in the cross-fire as the Sudanese Armed Forces and associated militias wage war. In an effort to drive the population from their land through fear and starvation, the Government of Sudan has blocked humanitarian assistance into the Two Areas, targeted civilians through indiscriminate aerial bombardment and ground attacks, and carefully timed offensives designed to disrupt the planting and harvesting seasons.

The United Nations estimates that close to one million people have been displaced or severely affected by violence in Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile. Independent experts now warn that parts of Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile face a very real prospect of a man-made famine by April 2013.

There is an obligation to try and stop this horror, and we must seize every opportunity to bring it to an end.

In its 25 January communiqué, the African Union has demanded that the Government of Sudan and the SPLM-N cease hostilities, grant humanitarian access and adhere to a clear timeline for direct political talks. Nine months after the UN Security Council passed Resolution 2046 warning the parties of consequences, possibly including sanctions, if their demands were not acted upon, it is time for the Security Council to increase the pressure on the parties to uphold their obligations and end the conflict.

All members of the UN Security Council should now stand with African leaders to ensure the Government of Sudan and the SPLM-N are convinced that there can be no military solution to their differences. Only through this show of global unity will the two parties muster the political will to agree to a cessation of hostilities, the first step to enabling the delivery of humanitarian assistance to all people in need.

Now is *not* the time for the UN Security Council to remain silent or to continue in ‘wait and see’ mode. Hundreds of thousands of lives hang in the balance in Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile. What is needed is united global leadership to prevent a man-made humanitarian catastrophe and forge a path to peace.

The AU Peace and Security Council and UN Security Council were able to forge a strong, united front to pull Sudan and South Sudan back from the brink of war in April and May of 2012. We look to you, our national governments, to do your part to ensure the UN Security Council seizes this moment of opportunity to speak up and ensure the men, women and children in Southern Kordofan, Blue Nile, Darfur and across Sudan have a voice and a future.

Our national government should therefore:

- Demand an end to aerial bombardment and other attacks against civilians in Sudan, which have continued in Darfur and increased in intensity over the past year, particularly in Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile;
- Urgently address the humanitarian situation in Southern Kordofan, Blue Nile and Darfur;
- Ensure a comprehensive approach to ending Sudan’s conflicts, focusing on the long-standing need for peaceful and inclusive democratic transformation;
- Take a leadership role in ensuring that those responsible for grave violations of international human rights and humanitarian law are held accountable;
- Encourage countries with close political and/or economic ties with Khartoum to join in pushing for the aforementioned actions.

As we enter the ten year anniversary of the conflict in Darfur, we remind our political leaders that it is time to reflect on and learn from the lessons of history. Silence and inaction may appear a comfortable road to take – but we know all too well from the case of Darfur – too many civilians are forced to pay too high a price for political prevarication. History cannot be allowed to repeat itself – it is not too late to stand up and be a voice for the people of Sudan. *As politicians from across the world, we call on you to uphold the international community’s commitment to “never again”.*

Yours Sincerely,

The undersigned.

*Signatories:*

Members of the United Kingdom Parliament:

William Bain - Labour MP for Glasgow North East

Hugh Bayley – Labour MP for York Central

Rt Hon Hilary Benn - Labour MP for Leeds Central, former Secretary of State for International Development (2003 - 2007)

Nicola Blackwood – Conservative MP for Oxford West and Abingdon

Sir Peter Bottomley – Conservative MP for Worthing West

Richard Burden – Labour MP for Birmingham Northfield

Geoffrey Clifton-Brown – Conservative MP for The Cotswolds

Mary Creagh – Labour MP for Wakefield, Shadow Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

Alex Cunningham – Labour MP for Stockton North

Sir Tony Cunningham – Labour MP for Workington, Shadow Minister for International Development

Nic Dakin – Labour MP for Scunthorpe

Mark Durkan – Social Democrat and Labour Party MP for Foyle, former Deputy First Minister for Northern Ireland

Louise Ellman – Labour and Co-operative MP for Liverpool Riverside

Paul Flynn – Labour MP for Newport West

Cathy Jamieson – Labour MP for Kilmarnock and Loudoun

Pauline Latham - Conservative MP for Mid Derbyshire

Mark Lazarowicz – Labour and Co-operative MP for Edinburgh North and Leith

John Leech – Liberal Democrat MP for Manchester Withington

Jeremy Lefroy – Conservative MP for Stafford

Ivan Lewis – Labour MP for Bury South, Shadow Secretary of State for International Development

Rt Hon Elfyn Llwyd - Plaid Cymru MP for Dwyfor Meirionnydd

John Mann – Labour MP for Bassetlaw

Ann McKeichin – Labour MP for Glasgow North

Madeleine Moon – Labour MP for Bridgend

Penny Mordaunt – Conservative MP for Portsmouth North

Stephen Mosley – Conservative MP for the City of Chester

Pamela Nash – Labour MP for Airdrie and Shotts

Yasmin Qureshi – Labour MP for Bolton South East

Dame Joan Ruddock – Labour MP for Lewisham Deptford

Lord Avebury – Liberal Democrat

Lord Alton of Liverpool – Crossbench

Baroness Armstrong of Hill Top – Labour

Lord Brooke of Sutton Mandeville – Conservative

Lord Chidgey of Hamble-le-Rice – Liberal Democrat

Lord McConnell of Glenscorrodale – Labour

Lord Collins of Highbury – Labour

Baroness Cox of Queensbury - Conservative

Lord Curry of Kirkharle – Crossbench

Lord Dholakia of Waltham Brooks – Liberal Democrat

Lord Edmiston of Lapworth – Conservative

Baroness Goudie of Roundwood – Labour

Baroness Kinnock of Holyhead – Labour

Lord Rea – Labour

Earl of Sandwich – Crossbench

Baroness Tonge of Kew – Crossbench

Members of the United States House of Representatives:

Michael E. Capuano (D-MA)

Frank R. Wolf (R-VA)

Barbara Lee (D-CA)

Michael T. McCaul (R-TX)

Steny H. Hoyer (D-MD)

John Conyers, Jr. (D-MI)

Aaron Schock (R-IL)

Sam Farr (D-CA)

Mike Honda (D-CA)

Wm. Lacy Clay (D-MO)

Joseph Crowley (D-NY)

Sanford Bishop (D-GA)

James P. Moran (D-VA)

James P. McGovern (D-MA)

Chris Van Hollen (D-MD)

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Michael H. Michaud (D-ME)

Scott H. Peters (D-CA)

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Joe Courtney (D-CT)

Jackie Speier (D-CA)

Joseph R. Pitts (R-PA)

Jared Polis (D-CO)

Suzanne Bonamici (D-OR)

Bill Pascrell, Jr. (D-NJ)

Members of the Australian Parliament:

Senator Simon Birmingham  
Liberal Party - South Australia

Senator Doug Cameron  
Australian Labor Party - New South Wales

Senator the Hon Jacinta Collins – Parliamentary Secretary for School Education and Workplace Relations  
Australian Labor Party - Victoria

Senator the Hon David Feeney – Parliamentary Secretary for Defence  
Australian Labor Party - Victoria

Laurie Ferguson MP  
Federal Member for Werriwa  
Australian Labor Party - New South Wales

Hon Alan Griffin MP  
Federal Member for Bruce  
Australian Labor Party - Victoria

Hon Greg Hunt MP  
Federal Member for Flinders  
Liberal Party - South Australia

Hon Robert McClelland MP  
Federal Member for Barton  
Australian Labor Party - New South Wales

Hon Judi Moylan MP  
Federal Member for Pearce  
Liberal Party - Western Australia

Graham Perrett MP  
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Australian Labor Party – Queensland

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Michelle Rowland MP  
Federal Member for Greenway  
Australian Labor Party - New South Wales

Senator Lisa Singh  
Australian Labor Party - Tasmania

Laura Smyth MP  
Federal Member for La Trobe  
Australian Labor Party - Victoria

Senator the Hon Ursula Stephens  
Australian Labor Party - New South Wales

Senator Anne Urquart  
Australian Labor Party - Tasmania

Cc .The Members of the United Nations Security Council