

June 20, 2006

The Honorable Condoleezza Rice  
Secretary of State  
U.S. Department of State  
2201 C Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20520

Dear Madam Secretary:

As you may know, last month I wrote to the President calling for a Special Envoy to Sudan to ensure implementation of the Darfur Peace Agreement (DPA). As I noted in my letter, which is attached, the signing of the DPA represents an important step towards bringing a lasting peace to Darfur. However, the agreement is fragile and will require the sustained efforts and engagement of the United States.

Since February 2005, Deputy Secretary of State Zoellick has led U.S. efforts in Sudan. His periodic visits to the region were instrumental in getting the government of Sudan and the largest Darfurian rebel group, the Sudan Liberation Army, to sign on to the DPA. But, as Mr. Zoellick said following the signing of the agreement: "the key now is the follow-up."

With yesterday's news of Mr. Zoellick's departure from the State Department, I am even more concerned that implementation of the DPA will languish, thereby prolonging the massive humanitarian crisis that has plagued Sudan. Implementation of the DPA still faces several hurdles, including getting other key rebel groups to sign on, rallying the international community to contribute troops to the UN mission, and bolstering the African Union forces. U.S. leadership and the day to day involvement of a senior U.S. official is needed now more than ever. As you may be aware, the Congress has previously authorized the appointment of Special Envoy for Sudan in the 2006 Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act. I, therefore, once again call upon the Administration to appoint a special envoy as quickly as possible.

Additionally, we must continue to work to hold accountable those responsible for the genocide in Darfur. To this end, the United States Senate and House of Representatives have both passed the Darfur Peace and Accountability Act, which calls on the Administration to impose diplomatic and financial sanctions against specific high-ranking Sudanese officials and Janjaweed leaders named in a confidential U.N. report. I am hopeful that the Administration will drop its objections to this legislation so that we may move quickly towards final passage on a bipartisan basis.

Finally, it remains somewhat unclear what impact the DPA will have on future accountability measures. For example, in the Administration's view does the DPA satisfy any requirements for lifting sanctions against Sudan, and did U.S. officials offer to lift sanctions on the government to encourage them to sign the DPA? These questions need to be answered and resolved as we move forward. Therefore, prior to Mr. Zoellick's departure, I would urge you to brief members of Congress on the explicit -- and implicit -- terms of the DPA as they bear on U.S. obligations and policy.

Sincerely,

Harry Reid  
Democratic Leader