

United Nations Human Rights Council
Special Session on Sudan
U.S. Statement
Ambassador Tichenor
December 12, 2006

The United States is appalled by the violence in Darfur, Sudan and welcomes the Special Session on the situation in Darfur as we commend the Human Rights Council for drawing attention to this ongoing crisis. It is important to make clear that the international community respects human life. The United States reiterates its strong concern for the dire humanitarian situation on the ground in Darfur, brought on by continued violence by all parties and exacerbated by continued lack of humanitarian access in some areas. The United States will continue to help relieve suffering and to save lives.

We call on the Government of Sudan, and all armed groups, including those rebel groups that have not signed the Darfur Peace Agreement (DPA), to refrain from violence and to pursue a peaceful solution to the crisis. We welcome the decision by the African Union and the United Nations to convene a conference of DPA non-signatories early in the New Year. There is pressing need to streamline initiatives to bring the non-signatories under one umbrella. We are encouraged by the involvement of AU Special Envoy Dr. Salim Salim, whose role in the Darfur Peace Agreement negotiations was so constructive.

Pending the restoration of peace and security, the Government of Sudan must shoulder its responsibility to protect all individuals against human rights violations, especially against the use of rape as a weapon against the women of Darfur and the recruitment of child soldiers. We stress our continued concern for the plight of the victims and repeat our call to end the impunity of their aggressors. We demand that the Government of Sudan cease employment of the *janjaweed* against the innocent civilians of Darfur.

The United States is also alarmed by the incipient spread of violence into neighboring Chad and Central African Republic (CAR). This escalation represents a disturbing new aspect to the violence in Darfur and poses a larger threat to the regional stability of Africa and the well-being of the citizens of these countries.

We call on the Government of Sudan to immediately and fully accept the November 16 Addis Ababa Agreement, which calls for a hybrid United Nations/African Union operation in Darfur of a predominantly African character with UN command and control. The Government of Sudan reached this agreement in concert with the full participation of the United Nations, the European Union, and the African Union, with observers from each of the P-5 countries.

The international community will not accept the Government of Sudan's attempts to renegotiate the Addis Agreement, including their insistence that the UN play a subsidiary role to the AU, and that command and control be exercised by the AU alone. An effective and robust peacekeeping operation must deploy now. The Government of Sudan and all others involved in spurring the violence in Darfur must choose peace.