SAVE DARFUR COALITION

Save Darfur Coalition
2120 L Street NW, Suite 600
Washington, DC 20037
www.savedarfur.org

"Darfur, China and the Urgent Need for Effective Global Diplomacy to End the Genocide"

Ambassador (Ret.) Lawrence G. Rossin
Senior International Coordinator of the Save Darfur Coalition

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Subcommittee on National Security and Foreign Affairs
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Thank you, Chairman Tierney, Congressman Shays, and Members of the Committee, for inviting me to testify today on Darfur, China, the Olympics and what more U.S. diplomacy is needed to end the genocide. With your permission, I will also submit the text of this statement for the record. It is a special privilege to testify today, just after the House passed Resolution 422, calling on China to leverage its unique influence to end the genocide.

My name is Larry Rossin. I am the Senior International Coordinator for the Save Darfur Coalition, comprising over 180 faith-based, human rights and community organizations which, together, have worked for nearly three years to end the genocide. Their commitment inspires my engagement. I also speak from professional experience as an American Ambassador with a career in conflict resolution in Grenada, Haiti, Bosnia, Kosovo, Iraq and Afghanistan, and as former Deputy Head of UN peacekeeping missions in Kosovo and Haiti.

The Save Darfur Coalition has joined other organizations and concerned citizens in building awareness of the genocide in Darfur and determination that action be taken to end it. The presence here of "Dollars for Darfur" achievers demonstrates how the tragedy has moved Americans of all ages, all over America. Attention given to Darfur in the Presidential debates indicated how much our efforts, and those of colleagues like Joey Cheek, Jill Savitt and John Prendergast, have made the genocide a political priority. The President's decision to tighten sanctions on Sudan's regime showed that Darfur is accepted as a human rights challenge demanding a response from our government. We welcome action proposals by the new French leadership, with whom I met last week in Paris, demonstrating growing global engagement that we work with foreign partners to foster.

Sadly, all that work has made little difference for Darfur's people. After four years, 2,000 destroyed villages, as many as 400,000 dead, 2 million internally displaced, 1.4 million beyond the reach of humanitarian aid, and another 200,000-plus driven into Chad and the Central African Republic as refugees, al-Bashir continues his scorched earth campaign with near-total impunity. That the campaign continues is unarguable –a week ago, 1,500 women and children trekked 125 miles to the Central African Republic after fleeing aerial attacks on their villages.

Civil society can educate and agitate, but governments must act. There is a lot to criticize in their weak and incoherent response to the genocide in Darfur. There have been too many tough words, but too few tough actions against the regime. There have been too many envoys to Khartoum, with too little coordination, too many threats but too little done to make them real. The recent announcement by the Administration of modestly-enhanced targeted economic sanctions against the regime is somewhat encouraging, but very unlikely to end the genocide.

President al-Bashir and his regime long since figured out how to bleed off such modest pressures, manipulating advocates for "more time for diplomacy" -- most recently the UN Secretary General – so they can continue unimpeded their murder and mayhem.

Khartoum will only end its genocide under serious pressure – it clearly wants to keep doing what it is doing and calculates that murder costs it nothing. Changing that calculation requires much tougher measures by every member of the international community with influence to wield.

That means more from the United States, more from Europe, from the Arab League and from Africa.

And it means much more from China, an emerging world power with a massive economic, military and political relationship with Sudan and all of Africa.

I want to focus today on what China does wrong, what it needs to do right, and why the 2008 Beijing Olympics are properly linked to that. I will finish with a few remarks on why our own government needs to promote more coherent global diplomacy, urgently, through a "contact group" or some comparable structure.

China is Sudan's major investor, especially in the oil industry, and its biggest export market, and Sudan is one of China's biggest trading partners in Africa. 70% of Sudan's oil revenues, according to a former Sudanese Minister of Finance, fund its military, and it is that military that is waging war against Darfur's people, in close coordination with and control of the *janjaweed* militia.

China also provides major aid to Sudan. During President Hu Jintao's visit to Khartoum last February, China wrote off $80 million in Sudanese debt and provided an interest-free $13 million loan for infrastructure, including a new presidential palace.

Military ties are closer than ever. China has sold arms and weapons to Sudan consistently since the 1990s, including an estimated $100 million in fighter aircraft and troop transport helicopters, and helped Sudan set up its own weapons factories. This April, China's Defense Minister received Sudan's armed forces Chief of Staff in Beijing. He expressed China's willingness "to further develop cooperation between the two militaries in every sphere."

China maintains this military relationship despite a UN arms embargo against Sudan in place for Darfur since 2005. The UN's Panel of Experts reported last March that Chinese-made aircraft, small arms, trucks, and other materiel were being used by Sudanese armed forces and the *janjaweed* in Darfur. Beijing defends its military sales as legal, but Amnesty International has documented convincingly that they violate the UN embargo.

China has been a big diplomatic defender of Sudan. It has used its veto leverage to water down several UN resolutions on Darfur, whether on sanctions or war crimes, or most recently Resolution 1706 which authorized a robust UN peacekeeping force to protect civilians.

China's support for the al-Bashir regime regarding Darfur has not gone unnoticed among international civil society. Under growing scrutiny, Beijing has sought to portray itself as engaged – with quiet diplomacy and even some public statements – to get Khartoum to accept deployment of the UN peacekeepers authorized in Resolution 1706.

Beginning with the November 2006 Addis Ababa negotiation at which Sudan "agreed" to a UN-African Union hybrid peacekeeping force, China has in fact engaged, sporadically. President Hu raised Darfur briefly with President al-Bashir in Khartoum in February, and more recently Chinese diplomatic envoys claim to have reinforce that message. The commitment of 275 troops for the Darfur mission and naming of a Special Envoy are said to be further elements of increased Chinese engagement, although the Envoy's statements in Darfur two weeks ago largely echoed unbelievable official Sudanese depictions of good conditions for the displaced.

On balance, China's performance falls unacceptably short. At the very best, whatever "quiet influence" China may be bringing to bear is ambiguous, undermined by simultaneous debt write-offs, new presidential palaces, growing military cooperation and assertions that "all's well in Darfur." No wonder al-Bashir told a Middle Eastern wire service, after President Hu left Sudan, that he had not felt under pressure.

China argues that its "quiet diplomacy" will work best with Sudan, and indeed is working already. Recently we heard our Administration's Special Envoy claim that China is playing a key positive role. We can understand why China would make these claims; why our Administration amplifies them is puzzling to us. We really cannot see any improvement on the ground, in the welfare of women and children in Darfur refugee camps, in improved humanitarian access, or a stop to Sudanese

bombing of villages, or in acceptance of the full AU/UN peacekeeping force al-Bashir just rejected again.

Still, we are convinced that China has real influence to wield. China claims that it was Assistant Foreign Minister Zhai Jun's visit to Khartoum that achieved Sudan's acceptance of the UN "heavy support package" for the AU force in Darfur. We believe that. And if one mid-ranking Chinese official can get Khartoum to reverse six months of rejection, what more could China achieve if it really leveraged its relationships to end the genocide?

China expresses loud concern at civil society agitation about its negative role in Sudan in the context of the Beijing Olympics, the slogan of which is "One World, One Dream." I can promise this: more is coming. China is extremely well-placed to extract Sudan's consent to UN peacekeepers and an inclusive peace process – and to stop killing its people. That has not yet happened. Until it does, international outrage will mount at China's complicity.

We have told the Chinese directly that whether the Olympics-related campaign swells or not is entirely in their hands; that civil society pressure will sharpen unless China visibly helps end the genocide. How can the Darfur nightmare not intrude into the Beijing "Dream?"

We suggested to the Chinese several measures that would show real seriousness – including:

- acknowledging publicly, and condemning, the mass killings, torture, rape, and displacement in Darfur;
- affirming, in line with preponderant international assessment, that Sudan's government bears overwhelming responsibility for the devastation in Darfur;
- warning it will not accept President al-Bashir's continued obstruction of UN peacekeepers, and visibly acting to end it;
- warning it will not accept Government obstruction of a renewed and inclusive peace process, and visibly acting to end it;
- signaling that it will support a Security Council resolution enacting targeted sanctions absent immediate and demonstrable Sudanese government compliance with international obligations;
- redirecting the money for the new presidential palace to humanitarian aid for Darfur's people; and
- suspending military cooperation with Sudan until the Darfur conflict is ended.

This list is surely not exhaustive. China will know what more it can do to end the genocide.

Real Chinese engagement is an extremely valuable goal, worth great exertion to obtain. Lives depend on it. But that said, active Chinese engagement is unlikely to prove decisive unless integrated in a coherent, muscular international diplomacy that backs united messages to Khartoum with pressure measures.

Indeed, the frustration we all feel at the persistence of the genocide is due partly to poor U.S. and international diplomacy during the last four years. In just the last year, we've seen our Government's Darfur lead pass back and forth between Deputy Secretary Zoellick, Assistant Secretary Frazer, Special Envoy Natsios and Deputy Secretary Negroponte. It's hard to tell who is in charge. That US lack of coherence has been reflected internationally. Part-time diplomacy will not change Khartoum's cold calculations. The parade of uncoordinated envoys to Khartoum must end now. The last four years are a graveyard of failed persuasive diplomacy as much as of 400,000 Darfurians.

We therefore recommend that this Subcommittee exercise its oversight responsibility by urging the Administration to support the recent French initiative to convene an enlarged "contact group" of all countries with specific influence in Khartoum, including China. Only concerted diplomacy accompanied by real pressure will change Khartoum's calculations. That requires structure and persistence, both of which a "contact group" or comparable model are needed to provide.

Without promoting such structured international collaboration, how can our government expect to obtain mandatory Security Council sanctions? Without such structured international collaboration, the President's "Plan B" sanctions will just inscribe themselves on the four-year long list of showy gestures toward Khartoum taken while villages burned, women were raped and people were murdered – that is, while Darfur's genocide proceeded unchecked.

China can and must do more to end Darfur's agony. So must the entire international community, acting together. That's another job this Administration must take in hand. We urge your Subcommittee to press the Administration to do so.

I look forward to your questions. Thank you.