

Dear Kerry  
Dear Hague  
Dear 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".*

Signed: