

We cannot stand still in the face of systematic and widespread rape in the Darfur region. The U.S. Congress has a moral obligation to reach out and do all it can to put an end to this tragedy. I strongly support this important piece of legislation and encourage my colleagues to do the same.

Mr. LEWIS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I am a proud cosponsor of this resolution, and I applaud the gentlewoman from Connecticut (Ms. DELAUR) for her leadership on this important issue.

Every day in Darfur men are tortured and massacred as women and little girls seeking solace and refuge are raped, abused, and murdered. This is a systematic effort to destroy an entire race of people.

Where is the humanity, Mr. Speaker? Where are our souls? How can we stand by when hundreds and thousands are suffering every day at the hands of their own government?

Today, on the front page of the Washington Post there is an article entitled "U.S. Promises on Darfur Don't Match Actions". It highlights our Government's inaction during one of the most horrific human rights disasters of our generation.

Every single one of us has a duty to pressure our Government, the United Nations, the world—to act.

Mr. Speaker, this bipartisan resolution is not about politics. It is not about pushing an agenda forward.

We have a moral obligation to stand up for the women and children in Darfur against systematic and unchecked abuse.

They have no voice, no government, nobody to stand with them, nobody to stand for them.

Every day that we wait for a solution to magically appear, is another day that a woman, a child, is stripped of her home, her family, her dignity, her health, and her humanity.

I urge all of my colleagues to support H. Res. 726.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. TANNER. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. TANNER) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 726, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the resolution, as amended, was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

CONDEMNING ATTACKS ON AFRICAN UNION PEACEKEEPERS IN HASKANITA, DARFUR, SUDAN, ON SEPTEMBER 29, 2007

Mr. TANNER. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 740) condemning in the strongest terms the attacks on African Union peacekeepers that occurred in Haskanita, Darfur, Sudan, on September 29, 2007, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 740

Whereas, on September 29, 2007, an estimated 1,000 heavily-armed rebels in Darfur overran a small base in Haskanita, Darfur, Sudan, occupied by the African Union Mission in Sudan (AMIS), brutally killing 10 peacekeepers—seven Nigerian soldiers and three other unarmed military observers and civilian police officers from Mali, Senegal, and Botswana—and wounding seven other peacekeepers, with 50 peacekeepers still missing;

Whereas, in an assault described by the African Union commander as "deliberate and sustained", the rebel group broke into the AMIS base in 30 vehicles with heavy artillery and mortars and battled for hours until AMIS forces ran out of ammunition;

Whereas the attacks were the worst attacks on AMIS peacekeepers since the deployment of the peacekeepers to Sudan in July 2004;

Whereas the United Nations Security Council condemned the "murderous attack" on AMIS peacekeepers and demanded that "no effort be spared" to identify and bring to justice the perpetrators of the attacks;

Whereas, in the aftermath of the attacks, the Government of Sudan secured the area reportedly to facilitate the evacuation of AMIS peacekeepers, but later was accused of burning Haskanita to the ground, driving more than 15,000 civilians into the wilderness or neighboring towns;

Whereas the attacks have been openly condemned by the United States Government, the African Union, the international community, and civilized people everywhere; and

Whereas the Government of Sudan has not publicly spoken out against or condemned the attacks: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) condemns in the strongest terms the attacks on African Union peacekeepers that occurred in Haskanita, Darfur, Sudan, on September 29, 2007;

(2) expresses its condolences to the people and Governments of Nigeria, Mali, Senegal, and Botswana, the families and friends of those individuals who were killed or missing in the attacks, and expresses its sympathies to those individuals who have been injured;

(3) expresses the solidarity of the people and Government of the United States with the African Union and the African Union peacekeepers as they recover from these cowardly and inhuman attacks;

(4) expresses its readiness to support efforts to bring to justice those individuals responsible for the attacks and efforts to detect, pursue, disrupt, and dismantle the networks that plan and carry out such attacks;

(5) expresses its support for the people of Darfur, Sudan, in their continued struggle against extremism and violence and support for their efforts to secure a permanent peace, justice, and return to their restored villages and homes; and

(6) encourage all parties involved in the conflict to commit to negotiate a final and binding peace agreement at the peace talks scheduled for October 27, 2007, in Tripoli, Libya.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. TANNER) and the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Tennessee.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. TANNER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the resolution under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Tennessee?

There was no objection.

Mr. TANNER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Let me thank Congresswoman SHEILA JACKSON-LEE for introducing this resolution, which condemns the recent vicious and deadly assault on African Union forces.

On September 29, 2007, an estimated 1,000 members of a heavily armed group of Darfur rebels overran a small African Union base in Haskanita in Darfur. Ten peacekeepers were brutally killed, seven wounded, and 50 others are missing. Seven of those killed were Nigerian soldiers. The other three were unarmed military observers and civilian police officers from Mali, Senegal, and Botswana. With consideration of this resolution today, the U.S. Congress sends its condolences to their respective governments and to their families who have made the ultimate sacrifice in a war far from their native soil.

While the nations of the world deplore the war in Darfur and have provided significant humanitarian assistance to refugees and displaced persons, we still have not demonstrated the will to end this crisis. The United Nations is intensely lobbying countries to provide helicopters for a U.N. African Union peacekeeping force, one of many obstacles to starting the mission. According to recent reports, no country has made a credible offer to provide the 24 transport and attack helicopters needed for the 26,000-strong force.

□ 1530

This lack of helicopters, in part, accounts for the deadly attack on AU troops.

After Rwanda, the world said, never again, never again would we stand by and let another genocide take place; yet we continue to fail in Darfur. For over 4 years now, we have failed.

Today, our Congress calls upon our allies and friends to help put an end to this nightmare. We call on the Sudanese Government, its militia and rebel forces to take up seriously peace negotiations in that part of the world.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to be a cosponsor of House Resolution 740, which condemns the horrible and cowardly attacks that occurred last month in Haskanita. According to reports, as we've heard, up to 1,000 heavily armed rebels believed to be associated with the Sudan Liberation Army ambushed the small base that had been occupied

by the African Union peacekeeping mission on September 29 of this year. Ten AU peacekeepers were killed, including seven Nigerian soldiers and three unarmed military observers and civilian police officers from Mali, Senegal, and Botswana. Seven others were wounded, and 50 peacekeepers went missing. This was the worst attack against the AU, African Union, mission since it first deployed in July of 2004.

Khartoum deployed its forces to secure the area on October 6. Three days later, the entire village was found burned to the ground. Though Khartoum has not publicly claimed responsibility, there is little doubt about who burned the village. The initial attack against the African Union peacekeepers and the subsequent burning of the small base must be condemned in the strongest possible terms.

It is outrageous that rebels would attack those who had been sent to secure the peace in Darfur, particularly as the international community prepares to deploy a much larger hybrid United Nations/African Union peacekeeping mission to the region. It is equally outrageous, Mr. Speaker, that the Sudanese armed forces would seek retribution for the initial attack by burning the village to the ground and leaving an estimated 150,000 people homeless as a result.

It must be made clear to all parties to the conflict, the regime in Khartoum, its armed proxies, and the various rebel forces alike, that the ongoing attacks against peacekeeping forces, humanitarian operations, and civilian populations in Darfur are completely unacceptable.

Those who are truly interested in peace in Darfur must stop these senseless attacks, fully commit themselves to a binding cease-fire agreement, and rigorously pursue a political settlement. Failure to do so will send a clear signal to the international community about who is and who is not interested in peace.

And let there be no doubt that the United States has done much to alleviate the suffering in this war-torn region. The United States has provided more than \$2 billion in humanitarian assistance and assistance to the African Union peacekeeping mission in Darfur. The U.S. has also led the debate at the U.N. Security Council to get a larger, more capable United Nations/African Union hybrid peacekeeping mission approved and deployed.

We have built and maintained the camps for the African Union forces, and we will continue to expand those camps until the U.N. takes over. We have also provided air lift for troops, and will fund 25 percent of all peacekeeping costs.

We have a dedicated special envoy who has led international efforts to bring peace to Darfur. We have funded and supported critical peace talks. We have imposed comprehensive sanctions against Khartoum. Meanwhile, China

and Russia continue to allow their business interests in Sudan to override their concern for human rights. Both have failed to take meaningful action at the United Nations and have blocked consideration of sanctions against Khartoum.

So all obstructionists to peace in Darfur, regardless of their association, must ultimately be held to account. It is particularly appropriate that we are considering this resolution as Darfur peace talks are getting under way in Tripoli, Libya because, despite the best of intentions, the international community cannot impose peace on Darfur. The burden is on the Sudanese themselves to find a lasting political settlement. The time for Khartoum and the rebel factions to roll up their sleeves and get to work toward that end is long overdue. And, frankly, the people of Darfur deserve better.

I thank the sponsor, Ms. JACKSON-LEE, for introducing this important and timely measure. I urge the support of all of my colleagues.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. TANNER. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield as much time as she may consume to the gentlelady from Ohio (Mrs. JONES).

Mrs. JONES of Ohio. I would like to thank my colleague, the gentleman, JOHN TANNER, for yielding me time. I just came from a memorial service for one of our former colleagues from Ways and Means, Charlie Vanik.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of legislation calling on the President of the United States and the international community to take immediate steps to respond to and prevent acts of rape and sexual violence against women and girls in Darfur, Sudan, eastern Chad, and the Central African Republic.

For many years now we have seen the devastating atrocities taking place in the Darfur region of Sudan. With the support of the Sudanese Government, the janjaweed militia has ravaged the people of Darfur, raping, torturing, murdering, and forcing thousands of Darfuris to flee to refugee camps in neighboring Chad and the Central African Republic. Today, we highlight some of those most vulnerable of these victims in Darfur, women and girls.

We saw the same devastation in Rwanda over a decade ago, where it is estimated that between 250,000 and 500,000 women and girls were raped during the genocide in Rwanda. The American people have made their voices heard on this issue, vowing never again to remain silent when humanity is threatened. To date, there have been numerous reports of rape. On July 19, 2004, Amnesty International reported that it collected the names of 250 women who have been raped in Darfur and information on 250 additional rapes.

On January 25, the International Commission of Inquiry on Darfur, in a report to the U.N. Secretary General,

reported numerous cases of mass rape throughout Darfur. This is just the tip of the iceberg. We must do all that we can to ensure that no more women and girls are violated.

So today we give voice to the voiceless. Today we speak up for those who are often overlooked and ask that in this country we do all within our power to stop the rape and sexual violence against the women of the Darfur region.

I would like to add my support to the other pieces of Darfur legislation discussed today and applaud all the groups who have truly been on the front line of this issue, particularly the students, who have been so passionate in their support. It is my hope that we will be able to work with the people in the 11th Congressional District and across this country to continue to let our voices be heard on the issue. I encourage my constituents to contact me with your ideas and resources.

I know that I'm speaking on another piece of legislation, but they all affect Darfur, and it gives me an opportunity to be heard.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, earlier this year, I had the opportunity to travel as part of a bipartisan Congressional Delegation to the war-torn nation of Sudan and see first-hand one of the worst humanitarian crises in recent times.

The entire world is currently watching in horror the atrocities being committed in Darfur. Many people have been called to action to try to stop this genocide. This includes hordes of humanitarian workers and peacekeeping forces. The most prominent peacekeeping mission in Sudan has been the African Union Mission in Sudan (AMIS), which is carried out by African Union (AU) forces.

Since July of 2004, AU forces have been on the ground in Sudan working as peacekeepers. Sadly, their peacekeeping mission has made these AU personnel targets for attack by rebel forces. The worst of these attacks occurred in Haskanita, Darfur, Sudan, on September 29, 2007. This attack on the AU base left 10 brutally murdered and 50 soldiers missing. In the aftermath of the attacks Haskanita has been burned to the ground, displacing 15,000 citizens. This horrendous situation is made only worse by the government of Sudan's silence in not speaking out and condemning these attacks.

There is no doubt that this was an atrocious attack, and today we in Congress join together to condemn all these attacks. These attacks show just how horrid the situation in Darfur is, when those trying to bring peace and stability are themselves victims of violence. We in Congress express our deepest sympathy to the families of individuals killed or missing in these cowardly attacks.

It is my deepest hope that the Darfur peace negotiations currently underway in Libya bring about a meaningful and lasting peace agreement for Darfur. The United States and the international community must work together to stabilize the situation in Darfur and prevent further genocide. Mr. Speaker, I look forward to continuing to work with my colleagues to bring an end to this international crisis.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me supporting H.

Res. 740, which I introduced, together with my good friend and distinguished colleague, Mr. CHABOT. This bipartisan legislation condemns, in the strongest terms, the attacks on African Union peacekeepers that occurred in Haskanita, Darfur, Sudan, on September 29, 2007.

I would like to thank the Chairman and the Ranking Member of the Full Committee, Mr. LANTOS and Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, and of the subcommittee on Africa and Global Health, Mr. PAYNE and Mr. SMITH, for their support and co-sponsorship of this important bill. Let me also thank my 55 colleagues who co-sponsored this legislation.

Since 2003, we have witnessed a systematic campaign of displacement, starvation, rape, mass murder, and terror in the western Sudanese region of Darfur. In the worst humanitarian crisis of our time, an estimated 400,000 people have been killed in Darfur by the Government of Sudan and its Janjaweed allies. An additional 2,000,000 people have been displaced from their homes and livelihoods. Both the House of Representatives and the Senate declared that the atrocities in Darfur constitute genocide in July 2004, and the Bush administration reached the same conclusion in September 2004.

However, three years later, the situation in Darfur continues to deteriorate. The United Nations reported a substantial decline in the humanitarian situation during the first three months of 2007, during which time 21 humanitarian vehicles were hijacked, 15 additional vehicles were looted, and gunmen raided 6 humanitarian compounds. The security situation makes it extremely difficult for aid organizations to reach vulnerable populations, and, in the 12 months preceding April 2007, the number of humanitarian relief workers in Darfur decreased by 16 percent, largely due to security concerns, restrictions on access, and funding limitations. The flow of humanitarian aid has been severely threatened by the escalating violence in the region.

Since 2004, a small contingent of African Union peacekeepers have been deployed to Darfur, responsible for maintaining security in a region roughly the size of France. The 7,000 peacekeepers under the banner of the African Union Mission in Sudan, or AMIS, have displayed exemplary courage and resilience, but they are woefully outmanned and outgunned, as well as chronically short of funding. Recognizing the near-collapse of the AU Mission, the United Nations, in July 2007, approved a UN-AU hybrid peacekeeping mission, to be known as UNAMID, which is meant to take over from AMIS shortly.

The AMIS peacekeeping mission recently encountered yet another significant setback. On September 29, 2007, an estimated 1,000 members of a heavily armed Darfur rebel group, in 30 vehicles armed with heavy artillery and mortars, overran a small base in Haskanita, Darfur, Sudan, which was occupied by AMIS peacekeepers. The ambush resulted in several hours of intense fighting that killed ten peacekeepers—seven Nigerian peacekeepers and three other soldiers from Mali, Senegal, and Botswana—and wounded many others.

According to U.N. estimates, in the aftermath of this brutal attack, which was described by the African Union commander as

“deliberate and sustained,” 15,000 civilians fled the area to neighboring towns or the wilderness, fearing for their safety. This attack is considered to be the worst on AMIS peacekeepers since their deployment in July 2004. The United Nations Security Council condemned this “murderous attack” on AMIS peacekeepers, and demanded that “no effort be spared” to identify and bring to justice the perpetrators of this assault.

Only recently, during the August recess, I had the opportunity to lead a Congressional Delegation (CODEL) to Darfur. This was the first CODEL to the region since the announcement of the joint UN/AU peacekeeping force. Along with my colleagues Mr. CHABOT, who joins me as the lead Republican cosponsor of this legislation, and Mr. SMITH, I had the opportunity to meet with government officials, civil society leaders, international aid workers, and affected civilians, as well as with the African Union peacekeepers responsible for protecting Darfur. I saw first hand the immense suffering of the people of Darfur, as well as the enormous strain on the courageous but outnumbered AU peacekeepers.

Mr. Speaker, I strongly condemn recent attacks on African Union peacekeepers. This legislation also expresses the condolences of this House to the people and Governments of Nigeria, Mali, Senegal, and Botswana, the families and friends of those individuals who were killed or missing in the attacks, and expresses its sympathies to those individuals who have been injured. It expresses the solidarity of the people and Government of the United States with the African Union and the African Union peacekeepers as they recover from these attacks, and the readiness of Congress to support efforts to bring to justice those individuals responsible for the attacks and efforts to detect, pursue, disrupt, and dismantle the networks that plan and carry out such attacks.

This legislation also looks forward, to the process of bringing about a peace settlement for Darfur. Crucial though effective peacekeeping forces are, they are no substitute for a serious and sustained peace process. Consequently, this bill also expresses its support for the people of Darfur, Sudan, in their continued struggle against extremism and violence and support for their efforts to secure a permanent peace, justice, and return to their restored villages and homes, and it encourages all parties involved in the conflict to commit to negotiate a final and binding peace agreement at the peace talks, which began on October 27, 2007, in Tripoli, Libya.

Early reports from these negotiations have not been promising. With key rebel groups boycotting the peace talks, media reports indicate that mediators will now have to travel to Darfur to meet with rebel leaders before actual peace agreements can be reached. Despite these setbacks, U.N. Special Envoy Jan Eliasson has maintained optimism, saying yesterday “I refuse to state that the peace process is interrupted.”

Mr. Speaker, as United States foreign policy remains centered on the highly partisan debate over Iraq, we cannot allow Darfur to slip through the cracks. I thank the over 40 of my colleagues who have joined me in cosponsoring this important resolution, which reiterates that attacks on African Union peace-

keepers in Darfur are unacceptable. Despite the setbacks experienced at this weekend’s peace talks in Libya, I believe it is important that we condemn the attacks of recent weeks, and look forward to the construction of a lasting peace for Darfur.

I strongly urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this legislation.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H. Res. 740 which condemns the armed attack against African Union troops that took place on the remote southeastern settlement of Haskanita, Darfur precisely one month ago. This horrific attack by rebel groups left seven Nigerian peacekeepers and three other peacekeepers from Mali, Senegal and Botswana dead. Seven others were wounded and 50 peacekeepers went missing. This is the worst attack against the AU mission since it was first deployed in July 2004.

And the suffering of those in the village did not end with this violent assault. The Armed Forces of Sudan (SAF) moved into the village on October 6, reportedly to “secure” the area and facilitate the evacuation of the AU peacekeepers. Three days later the village was burned to the ground and 15,000 people were displaced. Although there has been no official statement as to who is responsible for the destruction of the village, U.N. officials have quietly pointed the finger at the SAF.

Although diplomatic activity on Sudan has intensified in recent weeks, and talks on the Darfur conflict began in Libya on October 27th, there is little reason for optimism that a peaceful solution to the Darfur tragedy is anywhere in sight. Several of the rebel groups are refusing to participate in the Libya talks. The U.N. Special Envoy for Darfur, Jan Eliasson, and his African Union counterpart, Salim A. Salim, who are leading this negotiation effort, have a Herculean task ahead of them. They will need all the help that we can provide them, and it is critical that this Congress continue to highlight the tragedy of what is occurring in Darfur and seek every means to bring about a just and enduring peace.

I therefore thank my colleague Ms. JACKSON-LEE for introducing this resolution, which also expresses the readiness of the House of Representatives to support efforts to bring those individuals responsible for the attacks to justice and to dismantle the networks that carry out such attacks. I strongly urge my colleagues in the House to support this resolution.

Mr. TANNER. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, so I am pleased to yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. TANNER) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 740, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the resolution, as amended, was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.