

in human chains of five to 15 people. They were made to carry the goods the LRA had pillaged and then forced to march off with them. Anyone who refused, walked too slowly, or who tried to escape was killed. Children were not spared.

The LRA got its start in Uganda, where it has done and continues to do horrific damage. At one time, about 2 million Ugandans were displaced from their homes by LRA violence; the rebels massacred, mutilated and abducted civilians, and forced many into sexual servitude; and an estimated 66,000 Ugandan children were forced to fight for the group.

Uganda is still recovering from the LRA's campaign of violence. Having been forced out of Uganda, LRA bands have moved into neighboring nations, including Sudan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and the Central African Republic—countries already ravaged by man-made and natural disasters. As the latest report shows, it is still a grave threat. As John Holmes, the U.N. under secretary general for humanitarian affairs, put it, "they are still capable of wreaking absolute havoc—and they still do."

Because of the havoc the LRA has caused across central Africa, I am one of more than 60 Senators who have cosponsored S. 1067, the LRA Disarmament and Northern Uganda Recovery Act, introduced by Senators FEINGOLD and BROWNBACK. The act would require that within 6 months, the United States develop a comprehensive strategy for dealing with the LRA, including an outline of steps to protect the civilian population against LRA violence. The act would authorize funding to provide humanitarian assistance in areas affected by the LRA. And it would provide assistance for reconstruction and for promotion of justice and reconciliation in areas of Uganda recovering from the LRA's depredations.

This legislation would establish, as a matter of policy, a U.S. commitment to working with regional governments to end the conflict in Uganda and surrounding nations by providing support to multilateral efforts to protect civilians, apprehend top LRA leaders and disarm their followers; providing humanitarian assistance to relieve the immense suffering the LRA has caused; and supporting efforts to promote justice and reconciliation in the region affected by LRA violence.

We have delayed too long in enacting this legislation. The Senate passed this important legislation in March, and the House Foreign Affairs Committee favorably reported the bill to the full House last week. I am hopeful that the committee's approval signals the likelihood of approval by the full House soon. I hope our colleagues in the House will move swiftly to pass this legislation and send it to the President for his signature; to do anything less would be a failure to act with the urgency, and the humanity, that the LRA's campaign of terror demands.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that a recent New York Times article on this incident be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the New York Times, May 1, 2010]

U.N. SAYS CONGO REBELS KILLED SCORES IN VILLAGE

(By Jeffrey Gettleman)

KISANGANI, CONGO—United Nations officials said Saturday that the Lord's Resistance Army rebel force killed up to 100 people in a previously unreported massacre in the remote northeastern corner of this country.

Details are still emerging of exactly what happened. But according to John Holmes, the United Nations' top humanitarian official, the L.R.A. struck a small village in February, two months after it killed more than 300 people from several villages in the surrounding area.

United Nations investigators have spoken with several witnesses and victims of the massacre in February, including two fishermen who said they saw dozens of bodies.

But the investigators have been unable to reach the exact location because of the difficulties of traveling in one of the most rugged and isolated corners of Africa.

Mr. Holmes said that while recent military operations may have weakened the L.R.A., "they are still capable of wreaking absolute havoc—and they still do."

He said he learned about the February attack on Saturday, when he met with local authorities and victims in Niangara, an old trading post hidden away in the Congolese jungle that has recently been ringed by roving bands of L.R.A. marauders.

One of the people he met was a young woman whose lips had been sliced off last month. She was attacked by rebels while working in her field, she said Saturday, sitting in a hospital bed, her face a mask of gauze and tape.

"They told me I was talking too much," she said.

The L.R.A. has been waging a brutal and bizarre rebellion for more than 20 years, starting in northern Uganda in the late 1980s.

Originally, it said it was guided by the Ten Commandments, but soon it was breaking every one, massacring and mutilating civilians and becoming notorious for kidnapping young children and turning them into 4-foot-tall killing machines.

The Ugandan Army eventually drove the L.R.A. out of Uganda but the rebels simply marched into neighboring northeastern Congo, where they set up bases in isolated areas.

Recently, the Ugandan military has killed dozens of fighters hiding out in Congo and the Central African Republic, though the L.R.A.'s leader, Joseph Kony, who has been indicted by the International Criminal Court on crimes against humanity, is still on the loose.

In the December massacre, the L.R.A. killed more than 300 people in a brutal recruitment campaign near Niangara, in which a few dozen rebel fighters abducted hundreds of civilians, marching them in a human chain from village to village. Along the way, the fighters beat to death men, women and children they did not want to keep in their ranks.

"For anyone saying that the L.R.A. is finished, I would be careful not to count them out," Mr. Holmes said. "They have an amazing capacity to regenerate themselves, especially by kidnapping children."

NATIONAL ALCOHOL- AND OTHER DRUG-RELATED BIRTH DEFECTS WEEK

Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, I rise today in recognition of National Alcohol and Other Drug-Related Birth Defects Week. Substance abuse during pregnancy is the leading known cause of birth defects and mental retardation in the United States. Each year thousands of babies are born with the physical signs and intellectual disabilities related to prenatal substance abuse.

Of all the substances of abuse—including heroin, cocaine, and marijuana—alcohol produces the most serious physical and mental effects in the fetus, according to the Institute of Medicine. Referred to as fetal alcohol spectrum disorders, or FASD, the potential outcomes of alcohol abuse during pregnancy include mental retardation, growth deficits, altered facial characteristics, organ defects, behavioral problems, delayed motor skills, and various learning disabilities.

Researchers estimate that more than 3 million Americans live with an FASD and as many as 40,000 infants are annually born with an FASD. The tragedy of alcohol- and other drug-related birth defects is entirely preventable and must be addressed. We must increase efforts to reach out to all women of childbearing age and connect those most at risk to treatment and counseling services. Increased awareness and education about the effects of substance abuse during pregnancy is the best way to reduce the prevalence of devastating birth defects.

I recently joined Senators MURKOWSKI, INOUE, and LANDRIEU in introducing the Advancing FASD Research, Prevention, and Services Act, in an effort to improve the surveillance, identification, and prevention of FASD. This legislation will make grants available to federally qualified health centers to provide training to health care providers on identifying and educating women who are at risk for alcohol consumption during pregnancy and on screening children for FASD. Through national public and education campaigns, this bill will reach millions and raise awareness of the risks associated with alcohol consumption during pregnancy.

There is no cure for FASD and other drug-related birth defects. Yet the devastating effects are entirely preventable when pregnant women abstain from substance use. It is therefore imperative to reach at-risk women and ensure they have knowledge of the dangers of substance abuse, as well as access to quality reproductive and prenatal care. When we move past the stigma associated with this disease, we can truly help those and their families who are affected get the health, education, counseling, and support services they need and deserve.

I have long supported efforts to put an end to this entirely preventable and destructive disease. In my home State of South Dakota, over 7,800 individuals are suspected of living with an FASD.

With the leadership of the health professionals at our esteemed universities, parents, and teachers, among countless others, we have made some important progress in addressing this issue. However, there is more work to be done to prevent alcohol- and other drug-related birth defects in South Dakota and at the national level. The goal is to one day entirely eliminate the heart-breaking, lifelong effects of fetal alcohol and drug exposure.

SUDAN

Mr. FEINGOLD. Mr. President, there are many important issues that demand Congress's attention, but one that we cannot afford to neglect the situation is Sudan. We are in the midst of a decisive period that will determine the future of that country and shape the conflicts that have long besieged its people.

In less than 9 months, the people of South Sudan will hold their referendum on self-determination, with the option to forge an independent state. There are serious challenges involved with the holding of that referendum and any subsequent transition to independence. The potential for instability is high.

Meanwhile, the conflict in Darfur remains unresolved and is likely to get worse. Over 2 million displaced people are still living in camps, and earlier this week, one of the largest rebel groups in Darfur suspended their involvement in peace talks after alleging that the Sudanese Government has launched fresh attacks.

Finally, the peace in eastern Sudan, one of the country's most impoverished regions, continues to be fragile. The dynamics in each of Sudan's regions and the future of the country in general will have profound implications for neighboring countries, as well as the wider region.

Last month, the people of Sudan held their first multiparty elections in 24 years. I join the White House in commending the Sudanese people for their efforts to make these elections peaceful and meaningful, and I am pleased that the voting witnessed no major armed violence. However, I was disappointed by statements of the U.S. Special Envoy in the runup to the election suggesting that the elections would be "as free and as fair as possible." This was clearly not the case.

For months beforehand, many of us had expressed concern about the political, security, and logistical challenges to credible elections. The environment was clearly not conducive for opposition parties to freely operate and campaign, nor was it conducive for all voters to safely and confidently go to the polls. The inability of the government both in the north and in the south—to adequately address the significant infrastructure and logistical challenges resulted in decreased voter access.

There is good reason for the international community to question the extent to which the results reflect the will of the Sudanese people. Further-

more, the fact that the winner of the Presidential election has been indicted by the International Criminal Court for war crimes is problematic. In no way should the international community allow this outcome to take away from the serious charges President Bashir faces.

The White House statement after the Sudanese election was thoughtful and balanced. It acknowledged the significant problems with the process but also distinguished between the credibility of elections and the potential still for democratic progress. These elections were seriously flawed, but indeed there was evidence of the beginnings of citizen engagement at the local levels that did not exist before. It will be important to build on that momentum going forward.

The White House statement rightly pointed out that continued pressure will be critical to make progress for the civil and political rights of all Sudanese people. That pressure must come first and foremost from within the country, but there remains an important role for the United States and other members of the international community.

Over the last year, I have been concerned at times that the Obama administration has not exerted the requisite pressure to hold Khartoum accountable for a failure to live up to its commitments. There are too many promises, commitments, and agreements broken without consequence. Theoretically, I am not opposed to engaging the Government of Sudan, but I share Nicholas Kristof's concern that our engagement "ends up as a policy to go soft on [Bashir] and to reduce pressure on Khartoum to honor the referendum in the south."

With the election now concluded, the international community must redouble its efforts to prepare for South Sudan's referendum and its outcome, whatever that may be. It is critical that this referendum be held on time and that it be held as fairly and peacefully as possible.

In order for this to happen, there is much work to be done both logistically and politically including efforts to resolve the outstanding issues the CPA, as well as ambiguous postreferenda matters, such as resource allocation and citizenship rights. In the case of separation, these two issues are likely to be the most inflammatory and difficult to address. The international community, as well as countries in the region, has an active role to play in advancing related negotiations and preparations for the referendum. Sudan's neighboring states especially have interests at stake that could be directly affected by either a peaceful separation or a return to conflict.

We must see serious and detailed contingency planning for all possible scenarios, both pre- and post-referendum and they must get underway now. While the most obvious tripwire for a return to war would be a delay of the

referendum, planning must also include clear guidance on how to deal with the possibility that the different actors could seek to manipulate, or disrupt, the results of that referendum.

I continue to be concerned that the NCP could foment insecurity in the south as it has done in the past, but I am particularly concerned by the internal security challenges within South Sudan. They are considerable and will not be easily resolved. Humanitarian organizations reported that over 2,500 people were killed and an additional 350,000 were displaced by inter-ethnic and communal violence within southern Sudan throughout 2009. The Lord's Resistance Army continues to wreak havoc on communities in the southwestern corner of the country. In his testimony to the Senate Intelligence Committee in February, the Director of National Intelligence identified South Sudan as the area in which "a new mass killing or genocide is most likely to occur."

The task of transforming the army and police into modern security organs that protect civilians and respect human rights is daunting but vital. We need to roll up our sleeves and get to work on helping the South Sudanese to accomplish this task, while empowering UNMIS in the meantime to better protect civilians and monitor flashpoints.

Of course security sector reform cannot be separated from the other governance and economic challenges facing the region. Most South Sudanese have not seen much progress in the 5 years since the signing of the CPA. Communities continue to lack access to basic services including water, health, and infrastructure. It is no secret that the Government of South Sudan still has limited capacity, and in some cases limited will, to provide this assistance or manage its own revenues. This lack of will and capacity concerns me particularly because it is closely linked with the growing problem of corruption within the government. A lack of transparency plagues this young government by complicating and undermining efforts to distribute services and reform the security services.

This is not cause for delaying the referendum, as to do so would be a retreat from our commitment as guarantors of the CPA and could be seen as a reason to abrogate the agreement by either party. Instead, it is cause for increasing our efforts in South Sudan and helping the region to reach a basic level of political and economic stability.

I am pleased that the Obama administration is in the process of scaling up our diplomatic and development personnel and activities in South Sudan to prepare for the referendum and its aftermath. I urge other governments to do the same, if they are not already. The regional states and international community all have a stake in facilitating an orderly process and preventing an outbreak of violence. It is