



JCRC Statement on the Atrocities and Urgent Human Rights Crisis in the Sudan

July 21, 2004

The Jewish Community Relations Council, representing some 80 Jewish organizations and synagogues on public affairs issues of concern to the organized Jewish community, expresses its outrage at the escalating humanitarian calamity occurring in the Darfur region of Sudan.

Over the last seventeen months an estimated 30,000 civilians have lost their lives in an ongoing campaign of ethnic cleansing carried out by a government-backed Arab militia known as “Janjaweed”, committed to wiping out the native black African inhabitants of the territory. In addition to the dead, it is estimated that more than one million persons have been displaced and more than 200,000 have fled the country into neighboring Chad. Furthermore, the systematic rape of women, burning of entire villages and a policy of forced slavery for those who survive are all common practices of Janjaweed in their onslaught of terror. The government has unnecessarily restricted and delayed the flow of humanitarian aid thus depriving the victims of relief. If humanitarian aid is not allowed to flow freely in the country in the near future, according to some estimates, the death toll from disease and malnutrition could reach into the hundreds of thousands over the next several months.

For us as Jews, who were subjected to the murder of 6 million of our people, in the largest-scale genocide and ethnic cleansing of the last century as the world stood by, this crisis has particular significance. We know all too well the danger of silence whether during the Holocaust or in recent times. Indeed, this year marks the tenth anniversary of the genocide of 800,000 Tutsi people in Rwanda, a tragedy that again was fueled by the world’s indifference. (We cannot afford to be indifferent to the atrocities occurring in the Sudan.

We call on the government of Sudan to take immediate and decisive action to stop the atrocities and slaughter perpetrated against their own people, to disarm the militias and to allow relief workers to deliver humanitarian aid without unnecessary delay or restriction. Furthermore, the government of Sudan should take concrete steps to redress

the property and personal losses of more than 1 million of its citizens who have become refugees.

We call upon the United Nations to immediately pressure the government of Sudan to take the above steps without delay to stop the ethnic cleansing and prevent further atrocities and deaths. The international community must also do everything in its power to ensure adequate funding is provided to meet the needs of the victims.

We believe that all previous international sanctions on the government of Sudan should not be lifted until it acts to end the crisis in Darfur. Furthermore, to ensure protection for Darfurians whose lives are at risk, the U.N. Security Council should call for the immediate deployment of international monitors and peacekeeping forces under Chapter VII of the U.N. Charter.