

September 25, 2006

SCHAKOWSKY leads bipartisan letter to the sudanese president condemning his denial of the darfur genocide and his anti-Semitic comments at the un general assembly

WASHINGTON, DC -- Today U.S. Representative Jan Schakowsky (D-IL), a Chief Deputy Democratic Whip, was joined by a bipartisan group of 88 of her colleagues on a letter to Sudanese President Omar Hassan al-Bashir calling on him to apologize for and retract his dangerous and fictitious accusations directed towards the American Jewish community.

Speaking to the UN General Assembly on Tuesday, September 19th, the president of Sudan claimed that Jewish groups are lying about violence in Darfur in order to raise money for Israel.

President al-Bashir said reports of deaths and refugees in Darfur are "fictions," and that those "who made the publicity, who mobilized the people, invariably, are Jewish organizations." President al-Bashir's comments came on the same day that President Bush denounced government-sponsored violence in Darfur and named Andrew Natsios as his special envoy to the region.

The letter also demands that the Sudanese President work to uphold the Darfur Peace Agreement, and actively and immediately strive to end the genocide within his borders. Finally, the letter encourages President al-Bashir to work closely with Special Presidential Envoy Andrew Natsios who is ready to aid the Sudanese to achieve a final peace.

The full text of the letter:

September 25, 2006

President Omar Hassan al-Bashir

President of Sudan

The Embassy of Sudan

2210 Massachusetts Ave. NW

Washington, DC 20008

Dear President al-Bashir:

We were shocked to hear your comments on Tuesday, September 19th, at the UN General Assembly where you stated that reports of deaths and refugees in Darfur are "fictions," and that those "who made the publicity, who mobilized the people, invariably, are Jewish organizations."

Many of us have traveled to Darfur and seen the death, destruction, and misery of the innocent civilians in Darfur with our own eyes. The last three years of violence in Darfur have resulted in the death of an estimated 400,000 people and millions have been forced from their homes. This atrocity has been encouraged and facilitated by your government.

We are grateful that the American Jewish community as well as other faith communities have made a priority of raising the issue of genocide in Darfur. Instead of using the ancient

technique of making the Jewish community the scapegoat for your failures, we hope that you will take a close look at your own actions. In direct violation of the Darfur Peace Agreement and the will of the UN Security Council, your government has recently deployed approximately 26,000 troops and attack helicopters to the Darfur region. Your actions have directly resulted in an increase of attacks on civilians and humanitarian aid workers.

Mr. President, we call on you to apologize for and retract your dangerous and fictitious accusations directed towards the Jewish community. We also demand that you work to uphold the Darfur Peace Agreement, and actively and immediately strive to end the genocide within your borders. Finally, we encourage you to work closely with Special Presidential Envoy Andrew Natsios who is ready to aid your nation to achieve a final peace. Rather than fanning the flames of conflict, we hope you will act to save lives.

Sincerely,□

Signed by Representatives: Schakowsky, Pelosi, Lantos, Berman, Engel, Wexler, Crowley, Delahunt, George Miller, McDermott, Alcee Hastings, Kucinich, Maloney, Barney Frank, Nadler, Lowey, Rothman, Baldwin, Weiner, Steve Israel, Al Green, Jackson Lee, Pallone, McNulty, Markey, McCarthy, Michaud, Holt, Owens, Wasserman-Schultz, Costa, Waxman, Mark Udall, Doyle, Doggett, Ackerman, Jefferson, Kendrick Meek, John Lewis, Higgins, Cardin, Robert Brady, Tauscher, Jackson Jr., Sherrod Brown, Stephanie Tubbs Jones, Towns, Emanuel, Matsui, Kilpatrick, Stark, Van Hollen, Wm Lacy Clay, John Larson, Schiff, McGovern, Gene Green, Allyson Schwartz, Sherman, Meehan, Capuano, Lofgren, Miller, Waters, Dingell, Shimkus, DeLauro, Blumenauer, Lee, Fitzpatrick, Harman, Olver, Weldon, Akin, Filner, Fattah, Capps, Costello, Honda, Conyers, Moran, Solis, Kirk, Gutierrez, Grijalva, Berkley, Millender-McDonald, Pascrell