Madam Speaker, I am here because I indicated

that I believe that this debate or these

debates that we have had over these

last couple of hours may be some of the

most important lifesaving efforts that

this Congress can spend its time on this week.

We have heard our colleagues over

and over again talk about the devastation

and the outrage of what is going

on in Sudan. Let me thank Mr. LANTOS

and Mr. HYDE and Mr. PAYNE because I

am reminded that, as my good friend

and colleague who just recently debated

this question on the floor reminded

us, we have been here before.

And when we came here before, we

should have moved this legislation, not

contending to give deference to the

leader of Sudan anymore because he

has obviously shown us that it is not

his intention to do what is right for the

suffering people.

I have mentioned the fact that there

are so many who have fled and who

have been devastated out of the camps.

So many women, so many poor conditions,

so many harsh conditions, lack

of water, lack of clothing, lack of housing

and shelter, if you will, and certainly

the inability to protect oneself.

This legislation provides the sanctions

against those who will perpetrate

this horrible violence, but it also is the

kind of strong legislation that is needed.

And as my good friend from California,

Ranking Member Mr. LANTOS,

has said, it could do more. We could

support divestiture. And, frankly, that

is why I am supporting the legislation

of Congresswoman BARBARA LEE to call

for the divestiture all over the Nation

of any investment in Sudan.

But allow me to share with you why

this is such an important initiative. We

have just heard from the President of

Sudan, who has now begun new military

offenses in Darfur and who has

gone from country to country, Morocco,

Egypt, and argued his case that

he does not want U.N. peacekeepers in

Sudan. Who is he to reject U.N. peacekeepers

when he is perpetrating violence

on his own constituents, his own people?

Now, we have stood on this floor and

we have affirmed some of the positive

steps that our good friends in the Arab

world are making, and I do not step

away from that. But this is a time,

with the passage of this legislation, for

Algeria and Morocco and Egypt to reject

the pleas of the Khartoum government

and allow U.N. peacekeepers into

the Sudan. This is a time for this legislation,

which was passed some months

back, to be able to immediately go to

the President’s desk so that sanctions

can go against the individuals that are

perpetrating this violence. And if we

could, we need to move forward on legislation

that causes the divestiture,

and the reason is it seems impossible

for the President of Sudan, for the

Khartoum government to understand

the urgency and the necessity of coming

to grips with an existing peace

agreement that has not been implemented

or enforced. People are dying.

Surrounding countries are bending

under the pressure, and I would simply

argue vigorously that this legislation

needs to be passed and moved on to the

President’s desk. I ask my colleagues to support it.

Madam Speaker, I rise today in strong support

of H.R. 3127, which imposes sanctions

against individuals responsible for genocide,

war crimes, and crimes against humanity, supports

measures for the protection of civilians

and humanitarian operations, and supports

peace efforts in the Darfur region of Sudan.

The Darfur Peace and Accountability Act of

2005, H.R. 3127, is a bipartisan effort to impose

sanctions on the Government of Sudan,

its officials, and the Janjaweed militia who

have engaged in genocidal acts in the Darfur

region of Sudan over the past 2 years.

The genocidal regime in Sudan has left 2.5

million people displaced and at least 400,000

people dead in Darfur. Due to increasing violence,

15,000 innocent civilians continue to die

each month. Genocide cannot continue on our

watch; the United States must move towards

effective action against this most terrible

crime. The United Nations Secretary General

has described the situation in Darfur as ‘‘little

short of hell on earth.’’ Expert John

Prendergast calls it ‘‘Rwanda in slow motion.’’

The United States Congress and administration

are on record as declaring that the atrocities

being committed in Darfur, Sudan are genocide.

Until the security situation vastly improves,

the people of Sudan will experience increasingly

long-term adversity. Civilians can’t plan

on stability in the future. They can’t grow

crops, or raise livestock, if there is a likelihood-

not a chance, a likelihood—that roving

government-sponsored militias will beat, rape,

or kill them if they wander outside the protection

of makeshift camps. And these government-

sponsored criminals burn fields the people

have managed to grow, and steal or

slaughter the livestock the people

have managed to keep.

Over 400,000 people have died in the

Darfur conflict since 2003, with 3.5 million

people driven into hunger, and another 2.5

million displaced due to violence. Imagine if

the entire city of Las Vegas had perished at

the hands of government-sponsored bandits,

the population of Los Angeles was starving,

and both the cities of Houston and Atlanta had

all relocated due to conflict. The upheaval of

the South after Hurricane Katrina is our closest

reference to understanding the devastation

Sudan is experiencing, and yet the scale in

Sudan is overwhelming. We should all be

quaking with anger.

Human rights are not for any government to

give and take—they are inherent, self-evident,

and vital, as our founding fathers understood

so well. We should not be complacent when

such rights are violated or refused—we must

use what power we have to ensure that people

are free to live and thrive safely.

We must work to deter any escalation of violence,

and provide unwavering assistance to

diffuse the current strife. I commend the tireless

efforts of United States officials who have

helped secure the Comprehensive Peace

Agreement and the Darfur Peace Agreement.

And yet there is much to be done, the welfare

of a nation lies within our hands.

Our role is clear, and we must do what we

can to alleviate the desperation of the civilians

caught in the mayhem in Sudan. I urge my

colleagues to support this measure.