Thank you very much,

Mr. LANTOS, our distinguished ranking

member on the International Relations

Committee, also a cochair of the

Human Rights Caucus. Thank you for

your great leadership on fighting for

human rights throughout the world.

You have a long history of that. You

have personal experience in terms of

being the only Member of Congress who

escaped the Holocaust, and you have

brought that conviction, your ideas,

your courage to this fight once again

in helping the people of Darfur.

And I want to commend Mr. CHRIS

SMITH. He and FRANK WOLF have been

such leaders on this issue for so very

many years, and all of us who are concerned

about Sudan, in particular now,

Darfur are deeply in your debt.

I join the gentleman in commending

HENRY HYDE, as well as Mr. LANTOS and

DONALD PAYNE, our colleague, who

have brought this issue to the forefront

in the Congress of the United States. I

thank you for authorizing this legislation,

for your steadfast leadership in

calling attention to the crisis in

Darfur.

Mr. Speaker, I bring to the floor a

picture of the children, a picture of the

children of Darfur. All of us on our trip

that Mr. LANTOS mentioned, who visited

Darfur, 11 members of a bipartisan

delegation, all of us wanted to take

these children home with us, but that

wasn’t possible. There were so many of

them. And it wouldn’t be right anyway,

because they wanted to go home. They

wanted to go home to their homes

which no longer existed.

When we were there, we visited with

them. And after a day in the refugee

camp, our bipartisan delegation traveled

to Khartoum to meet with Vice

President Taha. He asked us, he said,

‘‘The Sudanese people want to know,

why are you so interested in Sudanese

domestic affairs? I know the American

people are free-thinking people, but

maybe your free-thinking does not create

a clear understanding of the facts

in my country.’’

Vice President Taha was denying

what we had seen with our very own

eyes that day, refugee children struggling

in the heat without shade, without

adequate clothing and sleeping in

make-shift tents that were made, some

of them, from USAID food bags

stitched together.

The Darfuris are forced to walk miles

outside the camps for firewood and

water, with the constant fear that they

may be attacked.

As Vice President Taha was denying

all of this, we could not help recalling

the stories of villages torched, women

raped, children kidnapped and men tortured

and killed. But even in the horror

of all of that, we saw hope in the

bright and playful eyes of the toddlers.

That hope, however, was diminished in

the eyes of the older children. They

had really seen too much. They had

seen too much.

The camps we visited were homes to

over 100,000 people. That was just what

we saw when we were there. There are

many more. That is just a fraction of

the staggering toll of the violence in

Darfur. But you can see these camps,

and you can see that some of them are

made out of USAID food bags.

According to the United Nations, 3

million people are in need of assistance.

Two million Darfuris have been

displaced, pushed out of their homes

and their villages, and nearly 200,000

people have been killed thus far, and

that is a conservative estimate.

Furthermore, the full human toll is

yet to be exacted. Concentrated in

camps with deplorable conditions,

when the rainy season comes, Darfuris

are now vulnerable to further death

from disease. Sicknesses like cholera

and dysentery could take tens of thousands

more lives.

We have seen variations on this

‘‘problem from hell,’’ most recently in

Rwanda. And at that time, that short

time ago, we promised never again. We

have heard never again over and over

again.

The humanitarian disaster in Darfur

challenges the conscience of the world.

It is the systemic destruction of a people.

It is genocide.

While we were in the Sudan, back

home President Bush reaffirmed that

this is, indeed, genocide. When some of

us, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. JOE WILSON and Mr.

CLYBURN and I met with the President

at the White House to thank him for

his leadership and report on our trip,

we also asked him to appoint a special

envoy, special U.S. envoy for the

Sudan. This envoy would signal that

bringing peace and stability to the

Sudan is a priority of the United

States, and it is a part of this legislation

that is on the floor today. This

envoy, U.S. special envoy, is necessary

because it will help stop the violence,

bring the parties to the negotiating

table, and get humanitarian relief to

the people who need it.

Essential to stopping the violence is

stopping the Janjaweed. I heard Congressman

SMITH talking about the

Janjaweed in his remarks, and after

persistent questioning in our meeting

with Vice President Taha, Congresswoman

MAXINE WATERS, in a very diplomatic

but persistent way, questioned

him about the Sudanese government’s

support of the Janjaweed, which he

first denied but later admitted that

they had supported the Janjaweed in

the past. This was the first admission

that we had seen.

Before we went into Darfur, the U.S.

military briefed us that the Janjaweed

is an extension of the Sudanese military,

and they are engaged in state

sponsored violence. This must end.

The African Union is to be commended

for its efforts to protect

Darfur. We saw the AU’s camps there

where people were getting at least

something to eat and perhaps some

medical attention for the first time.

But so much more needs to be done.

So that is why this legislation on the

floor today is so important, because I

don’t even know if these children are

even alive 1 month after we came

home, these beautiful children.

Many people in our country have

been actively involved in the effort to

get more support and humanitarian assistance

on the ground. The United Nations

dollars for Darfur were running

out in March.

Humanitarian workers in Sudan are

harassed, their convoys diverted and

attacked, and some of these workers

have been kidnapped. Humanitarian

workers bring no political agenda or no

destabilizing intentions to the Sudan.

They carry with them hope and sometimes

health. They must be protected.

Their supplies must not be diverted,

and their volunteers must not be detained.

So that is why I am very pleased that

we were able to pass, in the supplemental,

the President’s request for $439

million, and that Mr. CAPUANO’s initiative

to add $50 million for assistance

was accepted by the House. We hope it

will be considered in the Senate.

So this legislation, as was spelled out

by Mr. LANTOS and Mr. SMITH, so I

won’t go into it again, contains very,

very important initiatives to help

make matters better. Stop the violence,

bring the parties to the table,

get the humanitarian assistance to the

people.

This brings us back to Vice President

Taha’s question, why is the United

States so interested in Sudan? The answer

is that genocide is not the domestic

affair of any nation. It concerns the

world. And as our colleague, JOE WILSON,

said to him, Americans care about

people. Our care is reflected in the

working done for the people of Darfur

here in this Congress, in State legislatures,

in corporate board rooms, on college

campuses, even on high school

campuses and yes, indeed, even in the

White House.

This care was spurred by our religious

communities which have taken

the lead in our efforts. I salute many of

the religious leaders who have taken

the lead on this. And on April 30, many

people will converge, thousands will

converge on Washington, and there will

be events around the country put together

by the Save Darfur Coalition.

Each day that the genocide continues,

and each day that we wait, the

hope we saw in the eyes of the youngest

children can disintegrate into disease,

despair and death.

Again, on April 30, Americans of conscience

will come to Washington to

echo the call, never again. These citizens

will demonstrate on behalf of the

children of Darfur and demonstrate

that, not only is America great, but

America is good. And this legislation

on the floor today is a reflection of

that goodness. I support it, and salute

the bipartisan cooperation that wrote

it and brought it to floor.

Again, I thank Mr. LANTOS for his exceptional

leadership on human rights

throughout the world and in the Sudan,

and Mr. SMITH, Mr. PAYNE and Mr.

FRANK WOLF for their exceptional leadership

as well.