Mr. Speaker, I yield

myself such time as I may consume.

I first would like to thank my colleagues,

Chairman HENRY HYDE and

Chairman CHRIS SMITH and the ranking

member, my good friend from New Jersey,

DONALD PAYNE, for keeping this

House focused on the grave atrocities

unfolding every single day in Darfur.

Mr. Speaker, the U.S. Congress determined

some 2 years ago that the atrocities

in Darfur are genocide. We don’t

use that term lightly. I certainly don’t.

But it was my privilege to lead the debate

on the Democratic side designating

what is unfolding in Darfur a

genocide. President Bush later addressed

the U.N. General Assembly and

reaffirmed that our government also

designates what is happening in Darfur

a genocide.

The United Nations Under Secretary

General for Humanitarian Affairs yesterday

reported that the government of

Sudan is preventing him from visiting

Darfur as an eyewitness to the most recent

wave of war crimes taking place

there. In the past few months, marauding

Arab militia, backed by Khartoum,

have killed an estimated 10,000 children

and women and men.

These Arab militias attacked 60 villages,

sending thousands of people fleeing

into the desert. As we speak, Mr.

Speaker, Khartoum’s Arab surrogates

continue to disrupt U.N. humanitarian

services, kill and displace civilians,

and destabilize the entire security situation

in Darfur.

While the government of Sudan

grudgingly acceded to the Comprehensive

Peace Agreement, so-called, it

continues to block every effort to protect

civilians, stop the genocide, and

bring peace to Darfur.

The numbers of individuals killed,

raped, tortured, and displaced is staggering.

Genocide has destroyed well

over 60 percent of the villages in

Darfur. It has displaced over 2 million

human beings and killed an estimated

400,000 and driven additional hundreds

of thousands into refugee camps in

neighboring Chad.

Meanwhile, the escalating violence

on the Chad-Sudan border between

Chadian rebels and the Chadian military

is threatening thousands in refugee

camps and making humanitarian

assistance almost impossible. Refugee

men and boys are forced into recruitment

into the rebel militia. Rather

than getting better, the situation for

Darfur refugees is becoming all the

more precarious with every passing

day.

The President has proposed to our allies

that the United Nations have a

concrete plan to stop the violence in

Darfur, deploy NATO staff and resources

to the region immediately to

aid the embattled African Union peacekeepers,

and within 6 months establish

a formal United Nations peacekeeping

mission in Darfur. Mr. Speaker, I

strongly support this plan.

And yesterday I had the occasion to

talk to the distinguished Foreign Minister

of Germany, and I am pleased to

state that Germany and the United

States will stand together as members

of NATO in Darfur.

In a cynical move, the government of

Sudan is putting up every possible

roadblock to prevent this from happening.

The regime even threatened to

pull out of the African Union if it endorsed

a U.N. handover.

The government of Sudan opposes a

U.N. peacekeeping force for one simple

reason: it wants to complete the genocide.

Working with the African Union,

the United Nations, and our NATO allies,

we have a moral obligation to foil

this plan by actively bolstering African

Union forces already there before a

U.N. force can finally be deployed.

The African Union has an urgent

need for underground NATO advisers

and mentors in the areas of command

and control, use of intelligence, enhanced

communications, and for NATO

to continue its current assistance such

as strategic airlift for troop protection

and training at African Union headquarters.

As the most powerful countries in

the world, all of the governments of

NATO have a responsibility to contribute

in whatever way we can to

stopping this genocide. It is not a matter

of means, Mr. Speaker. It is a matter

of political will.

To this end my distinguished colleague

Congressman JOE PITTS and I

have introduced House Resolution 723

that calls on the African Union, the

United Nations, and NATO to work

closely together to strengthen the African

Union’s capacity to deter the ongoing

violence until the U.N. peacekeepers

are fully deployed.

Recently, the other body passed a

similar resolution sponsored by my

friends and colleagues JOE BIDEN and

SAM BROWNBACK. This effort to bridge

between the current African Union

mission and the fully implemented

U.N. peacekeeping operation will save

tens of thousands of lives and allow uninterrupted

humanitarian access to the

vast numbers today in camps in Chad

and in Darfur. I urge all of my colleagues

to cosponsor H. Res. 723, the

Lantos-Pitts resolution.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 3127, under consideration

today, demands accountability

on the part of the government of Sudan

and those most responsible for genocide,

war crimes, and crimes against

humanity in Darfur. Our bill imposes

sanctions against the perpetrators who

either directly or indirectly are causing

such large-scale human suffering

and devastation.

I encourage all of my colleagues to

support this important bipartisan bill.

Mr. Speaker, it is with great pride

and respect for his work on this subject

that I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman

from New Jersey (Mr. PAYNE), who has

been our conscience on the issue of the

Darfur genocide.