Madam Speaker, tonight

this House passed House Resolutions

740, 573 and 726 with regard to

Darfur and Sudan.

Madam Speaker, decades from now

our children’s children will look back

on these times as an ugly blemish on

human history. They will remember a

time when innocent people were senselessly

slaughtered in the Darfur region

of Sudan. The question is whether they

will look back and see that this Nation

and this Congress stood up for what is

right and just, or did we sit idly by and

watch from the sidelines.

Madam Speaker, we must be on the

right side of this issue. That’s why I’m

so glad that we have passed these resolutions

today. Although much work remains

to be done, they represent a step

in the right direction.

The passage of these bills rightfully

pressures the Sudanese Government to

end civil strife and ongoing human

rights violations in Darfur, which

threatens stability in the region and

the very fabric of Sudanese life.

As you know, Madam Speaker,

Darfur remains in great peril. Hundreds

of thousands of Sudanese have

lost their lives since the conflicts spiraled

out of control in February of 2003.

Over 2 million civilians have been internally

displaced, and an estimated

215,000 more persons have been externally

displaced in such neighboring

states as Chad. Even for those who are

internally displaced persons, they have

experienced anything but a safe haven

outside of Darfur while ongoing killing,

torture, rape, looting and the unlawful

destruction of their property by all

parties continues, mainly by the

janjaweed, associated militia groups,

and the institution that should be protecting

them, the Sudanese Government.

Indeed, as House Resolution 726

points out, it has become treacherous

for women or young ladies in Darfur or

eastern Chad to leave their villages to

collect firewood or food from the market.

They are at risk of being raped

and assaulted, which, unfortunately, to

date is exactly what has occurred to

thousands.

Although some strides have been

made in reducing the government’s

participation in continued human

rights abuses in Darfur, militia groups

remain a very real and present threat

for the civilians in Darfur and eastern

Chad, despite peace negotiations.

Particularly, as reported by the

United Nations, these systematic

human rights violations have been and

continue to be committed with total

impunity throughout Sudan, especially

in Darfur. It is clear that the Government

of Sudan has taken to turning a

blind eye to such atrocities, choosing

instead to provide strikingly few prosecutions,

sentencing or even adequate

examinations of war crimes or crimes

against humanity, whether by criminal

courts or those courts established to

investigate the violations.

These failures by the Sudanese Government

to respect and abide by customary

international norms, international

humanitarian and human

rights laws embodied in the Universal

Declaration of Human Rights, International

Covenant on Civil and Political

Rights, Geneva Conventions and

the Convention on the Rights of a

Child that it is a party to demonstrates

a lack of respect for international law

and responsibility that it has to protect

its citizenry from unacceptable

levels of abuse.

Meanwhile, this Bush administration

has held tightly to a hands-off approach

by failing to send any troops to

Sudan, despite there clearly being a

lack of an adequate and capable number

of African Union troops, amounting

to a mere 7,000.

The President promised to not allow

another Rwanda-style atrocity to

occur; however, it appears to be happening

once again, with little being

done about it. Even the peace negotiations

that recently occurred in Libya

appear to be faltering, with two key

militia groups failing to show up for

the meeting.

As such, I congratulate my colleagues

in passing these three vital resolutions

this evening. And I thank the

Congress, which has chosen to answer

the pleas for help by the people of

Darfur while the administration has

failed to adequately respond.

We must act with a great sense of urgency.

History will judge whether we

have synchronized our conduct with

our conscience.