Mr. Speaker, I rise

today to call on my colleagues in the

House to act quickly on an issue where

literally thousands of lives hang in the

balance. I speak, of course, of the situation

in Darfur, where the Sudanese

Government is pursuing a policy of

genocide.

This is different than your run-ofthe-

mill civil war. This is a case in

which a government has pursued policies

of widespread destruction, rape

and murder in order to destroy entire

tribes that it considers enemies.

The Sudanese Government and its allies

consciously target civilians.

I do not care which term you prefer,

a systematic violation of human

rights, violations of international law,

ethnic cleansing, war crimes, crimes

against humanity, or genocide, the

undisputable bottom line is that the

Sudanese Government is carrying out

and supporting acts so reprehensible

and so horrible that no one with the

ability to try to stop it can, in good

conscience, fail to do so.

For the last 3 years, the Sudanese

Government and its proxies, the

Janjaweed militias, have been attacking

villages in Darfur; destroying

homes, crops and properties; and killing,

raping and torturing innocent civilians

in a concerted effort to destroy,

or at least displace, the tribes most

closely associated with the Darfur

rebel groups. As a result of this violence

and the resulting starvation, exposure

and disease, 300,000 people have

died, and 2 million more are refugees.

A cease-fire agreement was reached

in 2004, and the Sudanese Government

agreed to monitoring by an African

Union force of 7,000 troops.

The deployment of this African mission

in Sudan, inadequate though it

was to oversee an area the size of

Texas, forced the Sudanese Government

and the Janjaweed militias to be

a bit more surreptitious about their

genocidal activities, which continued,

but at a significantly slower pace.

The Sudanese Government and one

rebel faction signed a peace agreement

this past May. Nevertheless, the killing

by government forces and the

Janjaweed militias has continued. In

fact, the Sudanese Government has

launched a major military offensive to

finish the job in Darfur before it is

compelled by international pressure to

allow the U.N. peacekeepers into the

region. This is a major violation of the

Darfur peace agreement.

The mandate of the African Union

peacekeeping mission in Darfur is set

to expire at the end of September, just

over a week from now. At that point

there will be no military force protecting

the people of Darfur from the

central government and the Janjaweed

militias, and no official observers to

deter the Sudanese military and militias

by bearing witness to their acts.

The only constraint on the Sudanese

Government’s genocidal policies will be

gone, and many of us are worried that

what will follow will rival the level of

death and destruction inflicted in

Rwanda 12 years ago. Moreover, without

the AU peacekeepers in place, humanitarian

aid deliveries will grind to

a halt, endangering the 3 million people

who rely on that aid for survival.

Millions of lives are at stake, and the

only practical solution at hand is an

extension of the AMIS peacekeeping

force’s mandate. The AU Peace and Security

Council is expected to approve

the AMIS mandate tomorrow. We need

to do our part as well.

Recently the other body adopted an

amendment to the 2007 defense appropriations

bill that would increase funding

for the African Mission in Sudan by

$20 million. The other body, to its

great credit, recognized the fact that

only the African Mission in Sudan can

prevent the likely deaths of thousands

of people.

I rise today to urge my colleagues to

adopt this provision in the conference

report, in this appropriations bill. We

have no morally acceptable choice but

to act and act quickly. Let us do our

part to prevent more deaths in Darfur.