Mr. Speaker, I

thank Congressman PAYNE, Congressman

MCGOVERN, and Congresswoman

BARBARA LEE for their leadership and

for their commitment to bring peace

and security in the war-torn region in

western Sudan that we have talked

about today as Darfur.

I rise today to echo what my colleagues

of the Sudan Caucus have already

said. We all know what is going

on in Darfur and what needs to be done.

What else needs to be said or done for

the United Nations to act effectively?

The situation in Darfur has deteriorated

rapidly over just the last few

months, with increased rapes, 500 rapes

over the summer in one camp alone; renewed

attacks on innocent victims, 12

humanitarian workers killed, including

2 in the last 4 weeks; 26,000 Sudan

Armed Forces headed to the Darfur region

to engage in a major offensive; renewed

air bombardments; the peace

agreement not working; continued integration

of the Janjaweed into the security

forces of the national police of

the government; government-sponsored

terrorism against innocent victims.

How many lives need to be affected,

Mr. Speaker, before we say it is

enough? Two point six million, is that

not enough?

How many people need to be displaced,

Mr. Speaker? Two million? Two

million is not enough?

How many people need to die? Four

hundred thousand women and children,

innocent people?

How many women need to be raped

before we say enough is enough in that

region of the world, and our Nation

will not stand for it?

Someone said the death of any person

diminishes each one of us. If that be

true, and if we are truly involved in the

global world, then all of us, every life

in this country, every life in America,

every life in the world, is made smaller

and less significant by the suffering we

let others endure and by the suffering

we tolerate of them in Darfur.

The people of Darfur are suffering a

slow and painful death, and it is a catastrophe

that doesn’t have to take

place. We have options. We can do

things about this. And as other speakers

have said, it doesn’t involve brute

force. It doesn’t involve going to war.

It involves making sure that the

United Nations does its job, that America

does its job, that we engage the

government there, but that we don’t

wait for the government to give permission

to come into the region, that

we do what needs to be done. Because

that region is so vast and so large and

so difficult to patrol, it takes a lot of

forces in there to make it work. And it

takes, also, people on the ground feeling

confident and hopeful enough to

take some things into their own hands.

Right now they don’t have any idea

what tomorrow is going to bring, and

they cannot have hope in that sort of

situation.

So, Mr. Speaker, we are here tonight

to urge the American people to become

engaged with us in the Congress, with

the voices that are here that are now

trying to tell the people in this country

how important Darfur is to all of

us, to our country not because it has a

lot of oil or a lot of sugarcane or a lot

of other things that we are using in

this country, not because it has a lot of

people there who are committed to democracy

and to America, but because

there are human beings there who are

suffering needlessly, and we can stop

it. We can do something about it. And

if we don’t, it makes us smaller in our

efforts to increase our stature in the

world.

There is no way, as some have said,

that we are going to take America’s

credibility seriously on the issues of

human rights and the issues of democracy

if we do not do it where it is taking

place in the worst and most flagrant

fashion. So that place today happens

to be Darfur.

We watched in astonishment when we

saw the atrocities in Rwanda. We

watched in other places around the

world. But the major place right now

where we have so much going on in one

place, one little corner of the world

where innocent people are dying and

we can do something about it, is

Darfur.

So I hope the American people get

this name in their minds, look this

country up on the map, and come to

understand what is going on. It is important

to us. It is important to us as

human beings that we do something

about this. And we are here tonight almost

just as voices in the wilderness

crying about this thing. Look, it is

time for America to act. It is time for

our President to act. It is time for our

Congress to act. It is time for all of us

to engage in this.

So that is why we are on the floor tonight,

to make sure that those who are

at home now around their dinner tables,

who are sitting and watching

some show on television might take a

minute just to think about the people

in Darfur and try to find a way with all

of us to join hands with them to help to

end their suffering.