Mr. Speaker, just

yesterday the former top U.N. humanitarian

official in Sudan, Mukesh

Kapila, issued a warning to the world.

He said that the Government of Sudan’s

military is carrying out crimes

against humanity in the country’s

southern Nuba Mountains in the Sudanese

state of South Kordofan. He said

that these acts remind him of Darfur.

Kapila said he saw military planes

striking villagers, the destruction of

food stocks, and literally a scorchedearth

policy. He said the attacks reminded

him of what he witnessed in

Sudan’s Darfur region in 2003 and 2004

when the predominantly Arab government

in Khartoum targeted black

tribes. Kapila served as the U.N.’s top

humanitarian official in Sudan at the

time. He said that the world must act

now to prevent another Darfur-type

situation in the Nuba Mountains.

The people of South Kordofan and

Blue Nile, two states inside Sudan

along its southern border, are facing a

hunger crisis. They haven’t been able

to plant because the government of

President Bashir is bombing them in

their fields. Sudan has refused to let

humanitarian aid into the region. The

United States, the United Nations, and

other governments have condemned

these attacks against civilians.

My good friend and colleague, Congressman

FRANK WOLF, traveled to this

border region at the end of February.

He interviewed refugees, recorded their

stories of terror: bombing from the sky

and soldiers burning villages and

shooting defenseless civilians; mothers

fleeing for their lives with their children,

abandoning their homes. I urge

my colleagues to go to the Web site of

the Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission

and watch the video he has

posted there. That’s at

www.tlhrc.house.gov.

We need to speak out, Mr. Speaker.

We need to let our government and the

world know that people care and that

we demand protection for these people

from Khartoum’s murderous policies.

This is why I and my colleagues, Congressmen

FRANK WOLF and MIKE CAPUANO,

are introducing today the Sudan

Peace, Security and Accountability

Act. This bill calls for a comprehensive

approach towards Sudan to address and

end the massive human rights violations

that are taking place across that

country. No longer should we allow

President Bashir to blackmail the

international community by threatening

humanitarian workers in Darfur

if the world tries to reach the desperate

people in the Nuba Mountains

with food and relief supplies.

We need a comprehensive strategy

and comprehensive sanctions against

Khartoum if the violations continue.

We need to let other countries know

that if they welcome and provide comfort

to President Bashir and members

of his government who have been indicted

for crimes against humanity, including

genocide, that they, too, will

face sanctions.

We need to provide the Obama administration

with all the tools and all

the authority it needs to seek a comprehensive

peace in Sudan, end human

rights violations, and bring those

guilty of crimes against humanity to

justice.

For decades the powers that be in

Khartoum have toyed with the international

community, while its own

people paid the price over and over

again. It has to stop, Mr. Speaker. It

simply has to stop.

Let me end, Mr. Speaker, with a few

other remarks.

No one can come to the House floor

today and speak about Sudan and protecting

the people of Sudan from their

murderous government without paying

tribute to our dear colleague, Donald

Payne.

Congressman Payne passed away yesterday

from cancer. He would have

been an original cosponsor of the bill

I’m introducing today. No one fought

harder for human rights in Sudan. He

was among the very first to call attention

to the genocide taking place in

Darfur. He traveled there, often alone,

with just one or two aides, to talk to

refugees inside Darfur and in camps

along the border and to stand witness

to their suffering. He was tireless in his

commitment to the people of Africa

and their well-being.

We all looked to him for leadership,

for advice, and for help. He extended

this same commitment to the people of

African descent in our own hemisphere.

I personally know how much he did to

promote the rights of Afro-Colombians

and to protect their leaders and communities.

We will miss him and we will

miss his leadership.

Mr. Speaker, he believed that human

rights ought to matter. And he believed,

as we all should believe, that if

the United States of America stands

for anything, it ought to stand out loud

and foursquare for human rights.