Mr. Speaker, this is

the proudest moment in the 108th Congress

and maybe even going all the way

back to the anti-apartheid resolution,

the sanctions that were passed against

South Africa.

In the midst of the intense partisanship

that has informed nearly every

issue that has come to the Congress,

somehow the Members on both sides of

the aisle have come together in the

most remarkable way. I cannot explain

it. I am humbled by it.

But I rise to say only this, that this

is only the first step, Mr. Speaker, because

we have a long way to go now.

Thank goodness that we got this resolution

in, which is easy to predict that

it will succeed. But we have the distinguished

other body, we have to engage

the administration of this country, we

have to go to the United Nations and to

the Security Council before anything

begins to happen. So I know all of us

will join and continue this struggle.

I lift up the name, in addition to all

of us, of the Speaker of the House of

Representatives, the gentleman from

Illinois (Mr. HASTERT); the gentleman

from Illinois (Chairman HYDE); and the

gentleman from Wisconsin (Chairman

SENSENBRENNER), who have made all of

this possible tonight.

Just two weeks ago, my colleague from Virginia,

Congressman FRANK WOLF, and I convened

a bipartisan meeting of Members to develop

an action plan to address the catastrophic

loss of life that is occurring in Darfur,

Sudan. We all agreed that the first critical step

was to raise the voices of the U.S. Congress

in a call to action by declaring unequivocally

that what is happening in Sudan is genocide.

In my 39 years in the House of Representatives,

I have never seen such incredible bipartisan,

bicameral cooperation. And in an election

year no less, with a highly polarized electorate.

But the reason is simple. The tragedy

in Sudan is not a Democrat or Republican

issue; its not a Muslim or Christian issue; its

not only an issue of race. Genocide is a

human issue. When genocide occurs, we must

all stand up and act with determination to end

the systematic effort to exterminate a people.

These are the lessons of the Holocaust, of

Cambodia, and most recently, of Rwanda.

In Rwanda, we shrugged our shoulders and

waited until eight hundred thousand (800,000)

people were killed, before we identified that

event as a genocide. In 1948, the United Nations

put forth the Convention Against Genocide

and the United States and many other

nations signed on to that convention, agreeing

to prevent genocide wherever and whenever it

happens. Our nation has taken an important

role in this crisis—negotiating a settlement to

the war, providing the bulk of the humanitarian

aid, increasing the pressure on the Sudanese

government.

Now—before it is too late to save the one

million lives at risk of death—now, we must

rally our allies and the U.N. Security Council

to take action. Now is the time to authorize

multilateral troops. Now the world must send a

clear message that genocide will no longer be

tolerated, anywhere.

If we can come together in this Congress on

such an urgent human issue, I believe that we

can bring together our friends in Europe, Africa,

Asia and Latin America to address this

genocide in the Security Council. That effort is

our moral imperative.

Passage of this historic resolution is the first

time this body has declared a humanitarian or

political crisis to be genocide. This would not

have been possible without the efforts of my

Republican colleagues—Speaker DENNIS

HASTERT (R–IL), Chairman of the International

Relations Committee, HENRY HYDE (R–IL),

Chairman of the Subcommittee on Western

Hemisphere, CASS BALLENGER (R–NC), Chairman

of the Africa Subcommittee ED ROYCE

(R–CA), Congressman FRANK WOLF (R–VA),

and Congressman TOM TANCREDO (R–CO).

My fellow Democrats played a critical role in

moving this resolution to the floor, including—

Congressman TOM LANTOS, Ranking Member

of the International Relations Committee, Congressman

DONALD PAYNE, Ranking Member of

the Africa Subcommittee (D–NJ) and the

sponsor of this resolution, the many Members

of the Congressional Black Caucus, under the

leadership of Congresman ELIJAH CUMMINGS

(D–MD).

And we must thank our friends in the Senate—

Senator SAM BROWNBACK (R–KS) and

Senator JON CORZINE (D–NJ) for their passionate,

diligent work and cooperation on this

issue.

While I congratulate you all, I hope that the

real victory will go to the people of Sudan.

This vote is an important step to saving lives.

I look forward to working with my colleagues

in the Hose and Senate, the Administration

and the United Nations to continue this important

effort to stop this genocide.