Mr. Speaker, the United States

has many tools in its national security arsenal.

And one that is too often overlooked and

under-utilized—despite the fact that it works—

is economic leverage.

Today, it is long past time that the United

States—and the international community—

exert maximum pressure on the Sudanese

government to stop the suffering in Darfur,

where an estimated 200,000 to 400,000 civilians

have been slaughtered and 2.5 million

more have been driven from their homes.

The United Nations has identified the situation

in Darfur as the worst humanitarian and

human rights crisis in the world today. The

United States has labeled the killings there as

genocide.

We must not turn a blind eye to this horrific

human suffering, which shocks our collective

conscience. Thus, the United States must lead

the international community in turning up the

pressure on the Sudanese government

through an effective divestment campaign

similar to the one employed against South Africa

three decades ago.

The Darfur Accountability and Divestment

Act—introduced by a leader on this important

issue, Congresswoman LEE—seeks to utilize

targeted divestment to exert further pressure

on the Bashir government in Khartoum.

This legislation requires the Treasury Secretary

to establish a list of companies whose

business activities in Sudan directly support

the genocidal practices of the Bashir regime in

Khartoum. The measure also authorizes State

and local governments which choose to divest

their pension fund holdings from companies

on the list, and it contains ‘‘safe harbor’’ provisions

for managers of mutual funds and corporate

pension managers who choose to do

the same even though their charters may

mandate that they seek to maximize gains.

Furthermore, the bill would ban U.S. Government

procurement contracts with companies

on the Treasury list and authorizes the

prohibition of these types of contracts at the

State and local level.

The fact is, while the United States currently

prohibits companies from conducting business

operations in Sudan, millions of Americans are

inadvertently supporting Bashir’s government

by investing in foreign companies that conduct

business operations there.

According to the Sudan Divestment Task

Force, the Khartoum regime ‘‘relies heavily on

foreign investment to fund its military and the

brutal militias seeking to eliminate the non-

Arab population of Darfur.’’ In fact, it is estimated

that as much as 70 to 80 percent of oil

revenue in Sudan is funneled directly into the

military.

Given our experience in South Africa, we

know that increasing economic pressure

through targeted divestment can work. We

have been talking with the Bashir government

for years now—with little effect. It is time to leverage

our dollars in an attempt to stop the

suffering in Darfur.