Mr. Speaker, how many

times can people say, ‘‘Never again,’’

and then proceed to observe the systematic

elimination of a people, of

genocide? When it happened in Rwanda,

we were shocked, horrified. While it

was happening and after it happened,

we all examined our consciences and

said, how could we have let that happen?

Never again. That had been said

after Bosnia; of course, after the Holocaust,

which was the ultimate, of

course, genocide.

So here we are with a very well-documented

genocide where the people of

the world are appalled by it. There is

great sadness about the loss of life and

displacement of people, much dismay

about the fact that the humanitarian

assistance cannot be delivered. In fact,

some of the humanitarian deliverers of

that aid are being killed in the Sudan

and Darfur region now. And yet, for

some reason, as a country, as a world,

we seem incapable of taking the necessary

action.

I want to commend DONALD PAYNE

for his tremendous leadership on this

important issue. With that leadership,

some of us went to the Darfur region

earlier in the spring of this year. We

saw the children. The little ones still

sort of had a bright spark in their eyes,

the little babies, but as the children

got a little bit older, you could see that

pall come over them. They had seen

too much, pillaging of villages, kidnapping

of their fathers, and murder perhaps

of their parents, the raping of

their mothers; just unthinkable, unimaginable

horrible acts of violence

right in front of the children. And in

their cases, some of them, too, were

victims of the same atrocities that I

just named.

We had a great delegation. Congresswoman

BARBARA LEE was a very important

part of it, and she brought her significant

knowledge of Africa and of

poverty and of divestment in her initiative

to lead the divestment movement

in this country, and I hope that

in the Senate version of the Darfur Accountability

Act that the divestment

language will be as written by Congresswoman

BARBARA LEE.

The chair of our Congressional Black

Cause, Congressman MEL WATT, was on

our trip. The chair of our caucus,

Chairman CLYBURN, MAXINE WATERS. It

was a very distinguished delegation,

and we went there with the idea that

we would make a difference, that our

voices would be heard with much greater

authority when we came home.

When we came home, we went to the

United Nations and we met with Kofi

Annan and said how urgent the situation

was and that something had to be

done, and we had hoped that it would

be just a matter of weeks, that was in

March, that something would be done.

We met with the President of the

United States and offered to work together

on the issue of the resolving

this terrible, terrible genocide in the

Sudan.

But the time has gone by. And we

said at the time, we can’t wait 6

months. They said, well, we probably

can’t get a U.N. force in there until 6

months. And we said, no, we can’t wait

6 months. These children will be gone

by then.

We were in a camp that had 100,000

people. These children, these beautiful

little children, were living in huts that

were made of just discarded materials.

And I couldn’t help but think that

when we send our aid, whether it is

grain or rice or whatever foodstuffs we

send in those bags that say ‘‘Made in

the U.S.A.,’’ you wouldn’t have

thought that you would see those same

bags as huts. That is what people lived

in, these bags draped over sticks.

The conditions were unhealthy, contributed

to the health problems and

the loss of life. The situation was desperate.

And still, 6 months later, we

are still looking for the answer.

Everybody bears a responsibility for

this. The American people certainly

care, and they have voiced their concern.

College campuses across the

country are the scene of rallies for

Darfur. Central Park on Sunday and

other places throughout the country,

people turned out for Darfur. Here in

Washington a few months ago, an incredible

record-breaking crowd came

out. The Jewish community, God bless

them, has taken the lead. Rabbi David

Sapperstein and others have come together,

brought the Jewish community

to be a major part of this because they

knew and they know what ‘‘never

again’’ means.

So let us, in making these statements

that we are making tonight, be

part of a resolve that this is a top priority

for our country. Last week our

delegation, we come together regularly

to see how we are doing, where we can

make a difference, where we go from

here, we met with many of the humanitarian

groups that minister to the

needs of the people in the Darfur region.

They told us that 14 humanitarian

deliverers of aid had been killed,

as I mentioned. They told us about the

horrendous conditions and how it all

worsened and how difficult it was to

deliver the aid. And we promised them

that we would make an even more concerted

effort.

So we wrote to the President, talked

about the deteriorating situation in

Darfur, and we did ask him to appoint

a special envoy, and we are very

pleased that he made that announcement

at the U.N. this week and that

there would be an extension, a request

to the African Union to renew its mandate

until a U.N. force can take over.

And that seems to be the course of action

that will be taken.

It is not enough. The African Union

force is doing a good job for the resources

that they have, but they have

no mobility, they have no charge to

really keep the peace. But they are a

presence and a respected one, and I admire

the work that they are doing. But

they can’t do the job without funds,

without mobility, the trucks, whatever,

to move around quickly, because

they are covering an area the size of

Texas. This small band is covering an

area the size of Texas. Mr. GREEN

knows a lot about the size of Texas and

the size of Darfur.

We also want to be able to bring our

delegation, our delegation was a bipartisan

group, together hopefully to meet

with the President to set some goals,

state the resolve, get the job done.

But this behavior that we saw in

Darfur, the treatment of these people,

was outside the circle of civilized

human behavior.

What we saw from the authorities in

the Sudan was denial of what was happening

in Darfur. So that makes the

challenge even greater. But if our word

is to mean anything and our credibility

is to be intact, we can’t really say

never again when we see the horrors of

a genocide and the look in the eyes of

the children to whom we owe more.

Many of us are very committed to

our faith, whatever religion we

espouse, and we are taught that we are

all God’s children and every person is

made in the image and likeness of God

and that we all carry a spark, a spark

of divinity within us; and every person,

therefore, is worthy of respect. I believe

that is the case.

So what is the justice in these children

and their families being at the

mercy of the brutality that is being exacted

upon them, without the whole

world not only saying it but acting

upon the words ‘‘never again.’’

So in that spirit I express my appreciation

to Mr. PAYNE for his leadership.

Nobody knows more on the subject, has

more dedication, and has been more

courageous in going into places that

have been a danger to him personally

in order to represent the American people

with great distinction and effectiveness.

I thank you, Mr. PAYNE, and

look to you for your ongoing leadership

on this important issue.