Mr. President, I am

pleased to join my colleagues on the

floor today to raise the critical and

timely issue of the U.N. Security Council’s

authorization of an expanded

peacekeeping mission for the Darfur

region of Sudan. Senator DURBIN has

been a stalwart advocate for the people

of Darfur for years and I admire and

appreciate his dedication to keeping

their plight at the top of Congress’s

agenda and to making sure we finally

take strong action to help the more

than 2 million displaced Darfuris who

are languishing in squalid camps and

punish those who continue to be responsible

for their plight.

The United Nations Security Council

is currently considering a resolution

expected to authorize a robust peacekeeping

mission to protect the innocent

people of Darfur. This is of course

a welcome, and overdue, effort. By

now, there is little disagreement anywhere

in the world that the current

force of just over 7,000 courageous but

underequipped and beleaguered African

Union peacekeepers is not adequately

protecting civilians or aid workers

from attacks by rebels and government-

sponsored militias, nor are they

able to sufficiently safeguard humanitarian

access to the tens of thousands

whose survival now depends upon outside

assistance. The AU force in Darfur

has repeatedly been deprived of adequate

resources and equipment, and

yet despite this inconsistent support

they have remained committed to the

job. Support from the United Nations

has been in theory forthcoming, for

quite some time. In principle, the roadblocks

have been many and the unfortunate

result of this hobbled mission

transition has been more violence,

more displacement, and more death

throughout Darfur.

The recent acceptance to expedite

the transition of this mission to a more

robust U.N.-AU mission is a step in the

right direction, but we must bear in

mind the number of agreements that

have long since been overlooked, ignored,

or flat-out rejected by the Sudanese

Government.

And while a draft resolution being

circulated indicates that the international

community is actively moving

forward to deploy this hybrid force,

I am very disappointed that the resolution’s

cosponsors have succumbed to

pressure from the Sudanese and deleted

language which condemned the government

for violations of past U.N. resolutions

and peace agreements and removed

the threat of sanctions in the

event of continued noncompliance. The

United States Ambassador to the

United Nations, Mr. Zalmay Khalilzad

suggests that the United States has

been ‘‘flexible’’ and ‘‘open minded in

terms of non-core issues’’ when negotiating

this resolution, and I can only

hope the administration will not .show

flexibility when firmness is required. I

certainly understand the necessity of

diplomatic compromise; however, I feel

strongly that the draft resolution

being circulated in New York has been

unacceptably weakened.

The amended resolution begins by

‘‘Recalling all its previous resolutions

and presidential statements concerning

the situation in Sudan.’’ In fact, however,

this new proposal steps back from

nearly a dozen Security Council resolutions,

dating back to July 2004. Those

resolutions were not just addressing

the ‘‘situation in Sudan’’—they were

expressing concern over the rising violence

in Darfur and the role of the Sudanese

Government in perpetuating the

conflict. The distinction here is an important

one and should not be overlooked.

The preamble goes on to detail the

development and endorsement of the

so-called Addis Ababa Agreement,

which laid out the three-phased approach

to an unprecedented joint

United Nations-African Union ‘‘hybrid’’

peacekeeping mission. At that

time—8 months ago—then-Secretary-

General Kofi Annan seemed confident

that troops would be mobilizing soon,

and the U.S. administration promptly

welcomed what it called ‘‘the successful

outcome of this historic meeting.’’

What appears to have been forgotten

in November, and again in the current

U.N. debate, is that in August of 2006—

just about a year ago—the Security

Council passed Resolution 1706, which

authorized up to 22,500 U.N. troops and

police officers for a robust United Nations

peacekeeping force with the

power to use all necessary means to

protect humanitarian aid workers and

civilian populations, as well as to seize

and dispose of illegal weapons. The new

resolution currently being considered

in New York does not reference Resolution

1706 or the Sudanese Government’s

defiant refusal to comply with its provisions.

Nor does it draw the appropriate

lessons from the failed attempt

to deploy U.N. peacekeepers in Darfur

almost a year ago.

Rather than include stronger monitoring

and enforcement mechanisms to

ensure that the Sudanese Government

and other parties to the conflict abide

by existing agreements and cooperate

with the new peacekeeping mission,

the resolution’s cosponsors appear to

have backed down to Sudanese pressure.

Their weakened resolution omits

a condemnation of Sudan for failing to

ensure humanitarian aid reaches those

in need, deletes reference to evidence

of violations of the UNSC-mandated

arms embargo—which many outside experts

have noted has been repeatedly

violated with little consequence—drops

a request that the Secretary General

immediately report any breach of this

or previous resolutions and agreements,

and removes a threat that the

U.N. would take ‘‘further measures’’—

in other words, sanctions—in the event

of noncompliance. How can we believe

that individuals will be held accountable

for their actions when we have

seen such entrenched impunity?

In terms of the peacekeeping mission

envisioned for Darfur, this new resolution

is much less ambitious than Resolution

1706. The new ‘‘UNAMID’’ mission

is referred to as an ‘‘operation,’’

rather than a ‘‘force,’’ and rather than

giving peacekeepers the authority to

‘‘use all necessary means’’ to protect

civilians and aid workers, the new resolution

allows them only to ‘‘take all

necessary action.’’ These semantic distinctions

reveal a worrisome retreat

from the robust, capable mission authorized

in Resolution 1706. And yet,

the Sudanese Government has criticized

even this diluted resolution. As I

said before, diplomatic compromise is

important, but not as important as

making sure we finally have the tools

to punish and put a stop to atrocities.

Sudan’s obstruction of this most recent

international effort to end the

genocide in Darfur should not surprise

anyone. After all, this is the same regime

we saw attack its own citizens in

indiscriminate bombing raids and obstruct

humanitarian access during 2

decades of bloody civil war with southern

Sudan. These same tactics are

being used today in Darfur.

Last week, in its first overall review

of Sudan’s record for more than a decade,

the U.N.’s independent Human

Rights Committee said that ‘‘widespread

and systematic serious human

rights violations—including murder,

rape, forced displacement and attacks

against the civil population—have been

and continue to be committed with

total impunity throughout Sudan and

particularly in Darfur.’’ The only thing

more disturbing than the Sudanese

Government’s practice of organized

atrocities as a method of governance is

the inability of the international community

so far to put a stop to these

crimes and secure justice for the victims.

How many more families must be displaced?

How many more innocent lives

lost? How many more U.N. resolutions,

presidential statements, political

speeches, and public rallies will be

needed? How much evidence of calculated

persecution will it take before

the international community stands up

to the Sudanese Government and the

rebels, brings them to the negotiating

table, and deploys an expanded peacekeeping

mission to protect civilians

and ultimately, help secure the peace,

in a region that for too long has received

much attention but little action?

Although the revised resolution

omits the original reference to Chad

and the Central African Republic, it

does express ‘‘concern that the ongoing

violence in Darfur might further negatively

affect the rest of Sudan as well

as the region.’’ The short- and long-term

impacts of the crisis in Darfur are

real, far-reaching, and very troubling.

The humanitarian consequences will

require massive logical coordination

and rehabilitation assistance. Economically,

the rebuilding of infrastructure

and livelihoods will demand additional

resources and technical support.

And this will be required not just for

Darfur but for the whole of Sudan, as

well as the broader region.

If this U.N. resolution is passed as it

currently stands, we can expect the Sudanese

Government to try to evade its

requirements and agreements without

a single consequence. Should that happen,

the toll of the genocide in Darfur

will continue to mount—in lives lost,

in persons displaced, and in fundamental

human values that the international

community has failed to uphold.

I yield the floor.