The committee will come to order.

Humankind is failing the sons and daughters of Darfur horribly.

We have watched as an entire people has been persecuted, displaced,

dispossessed, raped, and slaughtered. It defies belief to realize

that this has been going on for 3 long years and right before

the averted eyes of the entire world. As a survivor of the Holocaust,

I cannot bear silent witness to the first genocide of the 21st century.

Our committee will demand action from the administration, from

the United Nations and from our friends and allies in Europe, Asia,

Africa, and others, as I am sick and tired of waiting for a diplomatic

solution to this tragedy. The much heralded Darfur Peace

Agreement did nothing to stop the genocide. Nobody in the Sudanese

Government has been held accountable for the mass killings.

There has been no protection of civilians, and there has been no reversal

of ethnic cleansing. Even targeted sanctions against those

responsible for the genocide have had little impact on the Sudanese

leaders, who find the benefits of their oil dealings with China more

profitable than their assets frozen in the United States.

With or without the consent of Khartoum, we need a large number

of international troops on the ground to protect the people of

Darfur from slaughter, and we need them now.

The U.N. Security Council has correctly authorized the deployment

of such a civilian protection force to Darfur to augment the

under gunned and under manned African Union troops already on

the ground. But President al-Bashir and his cronies have rebuffed

all these treatises to allow for the deployment of these desperately

needed troops.

How can we change Khartoum’s mind about the deployment of

a civilian protection force? If we are cynical, we can try the approach

used by Chinese President Hu Jintao during his recent visit

to Sudan. While urging Sudanese cooperation with the United Nations,

President Hu Jintao made a jaw-droppingly generous offer of

$17 million to build a new presidential palace, $104 million in debt

forgiveness, and the promise to build a new railway line.

I doubt that Sudan’s leaders lost much sleep after their meeting

with the Chinese President. Perhaps that night they dreamed of

building the new railway line straight to Darfur to hasten the

genocide.

There is a better way. President Bush must call a summit of the

world’s civilized nations with a simple goal: Strong multilateral

sanctions on Sudan, investment bans, prohibition on travel for Sudan’s

top leaders and, most importantly, shutting down Sudan’s

ability to sell oil and gas on the international marketplace.

I welcome the administration’s announcement today of a Plan B

approach to block United States commercial bank transactions with

the Government of Sudan. This step, if fully implemented, will

have a major impact on Sudan’s ability to sell petroleum overseas.

I hope that tough sanctions on Khartoum will force the regime

to allow an international civilian protection force to enter Darfur,

but we can’t count on it. The United States must therefore work

with the United Nations, the African Union and our allies to prepare

a contingency plan for the entry of a protection force into

Darfur without the Sudanese Government’s permission. If we wait

much longer, there may be nobody left to protect in Darfur.

On a growing number of front yards across this Nation, we see

lawn signs with a simple message, ‘‘Not on our watch.’’ These signs

express the hope that in the words of former Secretary of State

Madeleine Albright, the world’s indispensable nation will actually

succeed in ending the genocide in Darfur.

The task in the months ahead is to turn this grassroots sentiment

and concerted pressure from this Congress into concrete action

by the administration and the international community.

Our patience has been totally exhausted. The innocent civilians

of Darfur are crying out for our help. We must not continue to fail

them.

I now turn to my distinguished colleague, the ranking member

of our committee, to make whatever opening remarks she chooses.