Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

I want to thank you, Chairman Hyde, and Ranking Member

Payne for their efforts in helping to draft H.R. 3127, as well as my

staff, Greg Simpkins, who did yeoman’s work on ensuring that the

language really fit the compelling needs of people who are facing

genocide in Darfur.

There was some real flexibility on the part of several Members

of our Subcommittee and the Full Committee on making changes

in the bill. As you know, Mr. Chairman, we marked this bill up last

July, and there have been many changes on the ground in Darfur,

and we have tried to accommodate those, and one of those is calling

on the President to immediately consider imposing sanctions

against the Janjaweed commanders and their coordinators who are

identified by the former Ambassador-at-Large for War Crimes for

their terrible misdeeds that they have committed. And, of course,

this legislation, at the core of it is the amending of the Comprehensive

Peace Act with Sudan of 2004 to block the assets and to restrict

the travel of any individual whom the President has determined

is responsible, whether by commission or omission, for acts

of genocide, war crimes, or crimes against humanity in the Darfur

region.

I would just point out to my colleagues that Greg Simpkins and

I did visit Darfur last August. We went to Komo camp. We went

to the other camp called Mukjar, and it was so clear to us that people

were within a kilometer of being apprehended, in the case of

the women, raped or murdered, as well as the men. That is how

clear and present the danger was and continues to be for the people

of Darfur.

I would point out to my colleagues that we plan on a trip, beginning

on April 17, and I would invite any Member of the Subcommittee

or Full Committee to join us, to Darfur, to Juba, and to

Khartoum, and we hope to meet with President Bashir. I met with

him last August, again, and had a very, very contentious meeting.

This is a man who, regrettably and sadly, has turned a blind eye

to the international community as we have raised issues, first in

the south of Sudan, where some 2 million people have been killed,

and now in Darfur, where something on the order of 400,000 people

have been killed.

I would ask unanimous consent that a full statement that I have

prepared, Mr. Chairman, be made a part of the record. It is a very

good bill. It does not do everything, but it is a very, very good step

in the right direction. Thank you for your authorship.

I’d like to thank Chairman Hyde for his leadership in drafting and offering this

legislation, for his graciousness and flexibility in negotiations with fellow legislators

on alterations to this bill, and in his willingness to find creative ways to get HR

3127 passed and enacted into law.

This House has devoted a great deal of time to addressing the needs of suffering

people in Sudan over the years. We’ve held hearings on the civil war, slavery, and

genocide in Darfur. We’ve visited Sudan to speak with the government, met with

various groups fighting the government, and supported humanitarian organizations

trying desperately to meet the critical and growing needs of the Sudanese people.

Most recently, we’ve focused on supporting the African Union force that has tried

heroically to address the rampant violence in Darfur.

Sudan presents policymakers with a complex set of priorities. Both the Administration

and the Congress concentrated a great deal of its attention on ending the

North-South civil war, and our efforts were successful in not only concluding the

fighting, but also in facilitating the Comprehensive Peace Agreement that includes

a revenue provision for sharing the profits from resources with the Southern Sudanese.

That issue of resource allocation was part of the trigger for the fighting in Darfur,

but was only one of the causes of the conflict. The Darfur conflict also has its roots

in religious, ethnic and economic differences between the people of Darfur and the

government in Khartoum. The conflict is based on recent political developments in

other parts of Sudan, but it also is based on historic conflicts between nomads and

farmers. The two rebel movements, both of which are splintering, are terrorizing the

population just as much as the Janjaweed. Add to their ranks rebels from Chad,

and tribesmen engaged in localized conflicts and bandits. There are members of the

National Congress Party in the Sudanese government who are guilty of complicity

in genocide, but that government also includes members of the Sudanese Peoples

Liberation Movement, who joined the government as part of the peace agreement

last year.

In addressing this complex situation, our Committee members have had to adapt

to the changing circumstances in updating H.R. 3127. However, we must keep in

mind that this bill was not designed to meet all possible circumstances. The main

intent of this legislation is to punish those Sudanese government officials who were

involved in the genocide in Darfur as part of an overall effort to bring peace to that

region. It was written before the Government of National Unity was inaugurated.

It was written before it became clear that the African Union forces needed additional

assistance to protect the people of Darfur and those who would help them.

Consequently, I would strongly urge my colleagues to pass this legislation without

further changes and support its passage on the floor of this House. We will have

to reconcile this legislation with the bill passed late last year by the Senate, and

it is in that conference forum that we can make necessary adjustments. If we continue

to tinker with this bill, it may never be passed because there are so many

Members in the House who have a strong interest in meeting the needs of Sudan

generally and Darfur in particular.

After all this time we’ve spent on HR 3127, it is now time to move it forward,

making our priorities known to the Administration, to the Government of Sudan

and its opponents, and to the international community on how we believe the

Darfur crisis should be handled.