Mr. President, I rise

today to join my colleagues in calling

attention to the horrifying crisis in

Darfur, a part of western Sudan where

over a million people have been displaced

by a brutal campaign of ethnic

cleansing perpetrated by governmentbacked

militia forces and official Sudanese

forces.

Human Rights Watch has documented

massacres, widespread rape,

massive forced displacement, and indiscriminate

aerial bombardment of civilians

in Darfur. Amnesty International

indicates that the ceasefire agreement

signed on April 8 has not stopped the

attacks against civilians on the

ground, stating that ‘‘attacks on villages

continue; indiscriminate and deliberate

killings of civilians continue;

looting continues and rapes continue.’’

Doctors Without Borders, which is actually

on the ground delivering services

in parts of Darfur, warns of desperate

malnutrition and tells us that

the absence of food aid on the ground is

especially alarming because measles

have broken out among the displaced,

and measles can seriously aggravate

malnutrition.

Because so many homes and farms

and mosques and entire villages have

been burned and totally destroyed, and

because normal life has been so thoroughly

disrupted, because fear still

dominates the lives of so many civilians,

and because the rainy season is

beginning—making much of Darfur

completely inaccessible by road—literally

hundreds of thousands could die

of starvation. The humanitarian task

before the world would be mammoth

even if a major political breakthrough

backed by what we have not seen to

date—actual effective action taken by

the government of Sudan to put a stop

to the attacks on civilians. Without

such action, the crisis deepens each

day.

And even as the government of Sudan

has failed to take effective action to

stop the attacks and protect the Sudanese

people, they also have denied humanitarian

organizations and international

investigators access to

Darfur, deliberately undermining the

world’s efforts to help those who are

suffering and starving. The government’s

aim appears to be to drive ethnic

Africans out of Darfur, and to

shield this abhorrent agenda from the

eyes of the international community.

It is a disgrace that this same government

was just elected to a third

term on the United Nations Human

Rights Commission. Africans have as

great a stake in the commission’s work

and aims as any people anywhere in

the world. They deserve far better representation.

Mr. President, crimes against humanity

have been and continue to be

perpetrated in Darfur, and the criminals

responsible for these atrocities—

the planners directing this horror at

the highest levels—should be brought

to justice.

I am proud to have joined with my

colleague, Senator BROWNBACK, who is

deeply committed to Sudan, in introducing

S. Con Res. 99. And I am so

pleased to have been able to work as

part of a bipartisan group, including

Senators FRIST, DASCHLE, BIDEN,

LUGAR, ALEXANDER, KENNEDY and

DEWINE on Sudan issue over the years.

I mention as well that Senator DURBIN

has been enormously helpful at this

time, issue, and discussion possible. I

hope that today, by calling for urgent

action to implement a humanitarian

response plan that does not bow to the

constraints imposed by the wishes of

the Sudanese Government, we can encourage

those working to respond to

the needs on the ground. And by calling

for a Security Council resolution

addressing the situation in Darfur, this

resolution will make it crystal clear to

the Sudanese government that the current

situation is simply unacceptable.

Mr. President, I applaud the efforts

of the State Department and the White

House to bring an end to Sudan’s long

and tragic north-south conflict. But

the hopes that we all harbor of achieving

a just and lasting end to that crisis

simply cannot be meaningfully realized

in the context of the kind of brutality

we see in Darfur.

At the same time, any hopes that the

government of Sudan harbors of an easing

of economic pressure or isolation

stand no chance—no chance at all, Mr.

President—of being realized until the

situation in Darfur changes, the attacks

are stopped, and the international

community—from humanitarian

aid agencies to cease-fire monitors

to U.N. investigators—has full,

unfettered access to the region. We

need to see real change—not rhetorical

change, not change on paper, not

change on some days not more of the

same on others. And we need to see it

right away.