Mr. President, I mentioned

last night the importance of

this African Growth and Opportunity

Act which we passed last night. In my

comments, I also mentioned a restatement

of my earlier comments in the

day, a restatement of what has been

said again and again on the floor. That

is that we as a country and we as a

world community need to focus attention

on the Darfur region of Africa, of

the Sudan in Africa.

Africa is a huge continent and a lot

of people do not realize how big Sudan

is. It is huge. When we say Darfur region,

the Darfur region is the western

part of the Sudan. If you look at the

continent, it is almost in the middle of

the continent of Africa. The Darfur region

is huge. It is about the size of

Texas.

Over the last year and a half, because

it started as a civil war, militias fighting,

government supporting the militias

there, we have 2 million people in

this region of Darfur, the size of Texas,

who have been affected, 1.2 million people

displaced, driven away from their

homes, driven away from the land they

might farm or, if they are herders, that

they might herd animals on, families

destroyed. A lot of people are fleeing

west to, Chad, 30 or 40 kilometers

away, to refugee camps. There are

about a million displaced inside the

Darfur region but away from their

homes, away, many times, from their

families and any chance of livelihood.

The rainy season has begun there. It

began a few weeks ago and will continue.

As the rainy season continues,

conditions get worse and worse. Roads

at that point cannot be traversed so we

cannot get enough food going in. There

is very little in the way of health supplies

going in. We need to bring attention

to that part of the world. The

world needs to shine a spotlight on it.

I was delighted Secretary Powell announced

yesterday he will be going to

that part of the world. I understand

Secretary General Kofi Annan also will

be going to that part of the world, to

bring increased attention on behalf of

the Congress, with 200,000 people dead

from what is happening there. They are

dying.

Statistically, they are dying from

disease: respiratory disease, waterborne

disease, diarrheal disease, malaria,

and a little bit of measles. Now,

with the fighting, it may well be that

the No. 1 cause of death there is the actual

fighting.

Right now we are not able to get in

sufficient aid. Aid and support is being

restricted by the government in Khartoum.

There is plenty of aid. The world

community is ready to go in there, but

right now there is a restriction by the

government.

I am going to keep mentioning this

issue on the floor at every opportunity

because we have a chance to reverse

this travesty. We are going to do that.

Every opportunity we have as public

officials, in interacting with the international

community, we need to continue

to put pressure on the government

of Khartoum to recognize the

travesty, the devastation that is going

on in that country.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence

of a quorum.