Mr. President, I rise

today to speak on an issue that too

easily comes off our agenda in America

and around the globe. We accepted S.

Con. Res. 99 which condemns the Government

of the Republic of Sudan for

its participation and complicity in the

attacks against innocent civilians in

the impoverished Darfur region of

western Sudan. I think it is not enough

just for us to be condemning in this situation.

It has all of the makings of

turning into a humanitarian crisis that

rivals or at least approaches the kinds

of problems we saw in Rwanda.

While we will take a stand in recognizing

it as a problem, I think it is absolutely

essential that we maintain attention

and focus when there are so

many events in the world that draw us

away.

The United Nations, international

humanitarian and human rights organizations,

as well as our own Government,

agree that the campaign by the

extremist, theocratic Sudanese Government

and their militia allies

against Muslim civilians of African

ethnicity in Darfur, western Sudan,

over the last 14 months has driven over

1 million civilians from their home. We

have the risk of another tragic genocidal

action in place.

The 1 million Muslim civilians displaced

within Darfur, Sudanese citizens

victimized by their own Government,

cling to life as displaced, homeless persons

living in the open or in pathetic

and inadequate camps, in constant fear

of further attacks and depredation.

Their physical condition is severely

weakened, food supplies are exhausted,

and the international community so

far has been unable to get critically

needed food assistance into the interior,

due to deliberate interference and

obstruction by the Khartoum government.

These individuals, these Muslim

civilians, are fleeing systematic attacks

by their own Government, Sudanese

armed forces, and their militia allies,

the ‘‘janjaweed.’’

The horrors which civilian families

in Darfur are fleeing include the coldblooded

murder of unarmed civilians;

pillage and burning of villages; organized,

systematic rapes of women—

wives, daughters, sisters; rape used as a

deliberate weapon of terror and political

control; and the deliberate destruction

of farms, the irrigation systems,

and food stockpiles on which this

already impoverished region depends;

in other words, deliberately manufactured

starvation that will lead to the

kind of real potential for genocide that

we have seen in other places on the African

Continent. We must stay alert.

We must keep the focus of public opinion

on this issue.

Last is a key point. Even though

from 10,000 to as many as 30,000 civilians

have died so far in Darfur since

February, 2003, the final death numbers

for 2004 and 2005 may prove far higher

because of the actions that are being

taken and the lack of ability for the

international community to actually

participate and provide assistance for

the unbelievable inhumane conditions.

This is all in the context of a very

difficult environment—underdeveloped,

impassable roads, huge swings in the

nature of the weather. It is an incredibly

complex and debilitating human

situation which needs to be brought to

attention. While genocide may not yet

have occurred in Darfur, the elements

are in place. The possibility of such

horrors should not be far from our

minds. That is why I speak out about it

on the Senate floor, and I will do it

over and over. This needs to be made

into something about which we have a

positive sense of responsibility, both

here in the United States and in the

international community.

U.N. Secretary Kofi Annan has compared

the genocide in Rwanda 10 years

ago to events that are now unfolding.

It will not be enough to go back and

look, after the fact, to this kind of inhumanity

to man.

We will have, later this year and

next, an occasion to vow yet again, in

the wake of another deliberately inflicted

mass murder and disaster, to

say: Never again. But we can do that

now as opposed to after the fact. I hope

all of us in this body, those of us who

are part of the Foreign Relations Committee

and are very focused on these

issues, will make sure it stays a priority,

although that is very hard in the

complex world we have. So I hope by

speaking out today and as we go forward

that this Darfur situation will

not fall off the radar screen.

This is a real risk of genocide evolving.

I think it absolutely essential that

our Government stand up, stand tall,

be outspoken, make sure we are not

tolerant of the developments that are

so readily reported in that part of the

world. It is important that we recognize

it and keep it in the limelight so

world public opinion can stop this kind

of action before it happens.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.