Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you for

your indulgence. I do, if it please the committee.

Let me say I want to thank you for holding this hearing on an

extremely important issue and at a very timely moment. The administration

has worked very hard over the past several years to

support the peace process in Sudan between the government in

Khartoum and the Sudanese People’s Liberation Movement. With

the signing of the last three protocols on May 26, that peace process

is on the verge of success and that is a truly significant

achievement.

Mr. Chairman, the impact of that agreement has has been severely

diminished and we have all been diminished by the horrific

attacks on civilians that are being perpetrated by the Government

of Sudan and its allied militias in Darfur. These attacks have precipitated

what U.N. officials have called the worst humanitarian

crisis in the world today.

We have already witnessed ethnic cleansing on a massive scale.

Nearly two million people have been displaced. Already as many as

30,000 people have been killed, and our USAID Administrator stated

2 weeks ago that, ‘‘Under optimal conditions, we could see as

many as 320,000 people die by the end of this year as a result of

the violence, disease, and famine.’’

A U.N. fact-finding team, quote, ‘‘identified massive human rights

violations perpetrated by the Government of Sudan and its proxy

militia which may constitute war crimes and-or crimes against humanity.’’

The violations reported by the U.N. include targeting of

civilians during military strikes, the widespread rape of women

and girls, the intentional destruction of homes, foodstores, livestock,

and crops, the razing of villages, forced displacements, and

thousands of disappearances.

This in itself demands that we seek to save the lives still in jeopardy,

safeguard and feed refugees and displaced people, and help

establish security so that people can return home, and hold those

responsible accountable.

The administration has responded with humanitarian aid and

raised the issue repeatedly with officials in Khartoum. The U.N.

has sent teams out to investigate. These are very important steps,

but I suspect we would all agree they are not enough. The international

community must condemn Khartoum’s actions unequivocally

and must insist that Khartoum stop attacks on civilians by

government troops and militias and provide unfettered access for

humanitarian workers in Darfur. We must hasten the arrival of

international cease-fire monitors.

The U.S. should bring real money to the table to respond to the

crisis rather than the empty promise of money it does not have. To

that end, I call on the administration to request a budget supplemental

that will provide the funds needed to address the humanitarian

crisis now, not next year. I will soon introduce legislation to

authorize such funds and to make the provisions of money to support

the north-south peace agreement contingent on Khartoum’s

stopping the killing.

We must also determine the true nature of what is happening.

The question for our administration witnesses is this: Is the Sudanese

Government engaged in or has it been engaged in genocide?

The press reports that the question is finally under active consideration

in the executive branch. Kofi Annan first raised alarm bells

about genocide in April, but the administration has appeared reluctant

to ask the question.

Let me be clear. We already know more than we need to know

to take urgent action to stop violence and provide humanitarian

aid. But we also must confront the question of whether or not what

is going on is genocide. If we do not, then we will fail ourselves as

well as the people of the Sudan. If we do not confront the genocide

question, we will renege on the promises we made after World War

II and in the wake of Rwanda to not stand by and let genocide unfold

again.

Genocide is a crime so shocking to our collective conscience that

the world agreed on a treaty dedicated solely to prevent its reoccurrence

and to punish perpetrators. If we do not confront the genocide

question, we will fail on moral and legal grounds to live up to

that obligation and we will rob ourselves of the opportunity to enlist

the help of others. The genocide convention states very clearly

in article 1 that ‘‘Parties to the convention undertake to prevent

the destruction of a people,’’ not just act after it has happened.

Finally, each and every time we fail to identify genocide and stop

it we numb our collective conscience to the crime and embolden potential

perpetrators to continue.

I hope that our administration witnesses are prepared to explain

whether this is genocide, what the U.S. course of action should be

to stop it, and how we plan to meet the humanitarian needs with

$188 million that is yet to be appropriated. I think I speak for everyone

in this room when I say that I do not want to see the

United States stand by while genocide unfolds. If we do not ask the

tough questions and give honest answers and if we do not act, that

is precisely what might happen. The truth of the matter is there

are a lot of other considerations, but none in my view rise to a level

that should prevent us from meeting our responsibility in making

that tough determination.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I look forward to hearing our

witnesses.