I do not, and I appreciate the chance to make

really a fairly brief statement, but——

I would prefer to follow the ranking

member. Thank you.

I’ll jump right in. I’ll take it. If nobody else wants

it, I’ll take it.

I like being majority leader of this body, you

know, I’ll make a decision. Mr. Chairman, I’d love to just jump

right in then, and I think that the fact that the Secretary at really

the highest level of the executive branch that two Senators here

and others from the House have been in the Sudan and Chad and

Kenya, surrounding countries, that you have addressed this so aggressively

with the President speaks volumes, the size, the magnitude

of this humanitarian crisis. And I want to commend you for

that and really commend this body.

We acted early in this body, earlier than a lot of people, not in

the Senate and in the Congress, but a lot of people in the world

expected, when at the end of last month, or 2 months ago, in July,

we, under the leadership of a lot of people who are here at this

table and in the House of Representatives really unanimously said

this is genocide.

And we said it’s genocide before a lot of the individual interviews,

which I’m sure Senator Corzine participated in, which I had

the opportunity to participate in about 3 weeks ago, with the thousands

of refugees, talking to scores individually of refugees that

several weeks ago, several months ago, watched as their wives

were raped, as their kids were separated, and as their brothers and

fathers and sons were killed before their eyes, entire villages wiped

out.

It’s savagery, it’s slaughter, and it’s going on, in essence, as we

speak, but it has been for several months. And the light that we

should shine upon it, which is the first thing we do through action

in this body and through the action with the House of Representatives

in calling this genocide, and up to the Secretary’s remarks a

few minutes ago, demonstrates the importance. We have an opportunity,

and we all recognize that, to reverse what could be one of

the greatest humanitarian tragedies of all time. And too many

times in the past we’ve waited and not acted.

So I’m very proud of the U.S. Congress, of the Senate, in a bipartisan

way addressing this issue, and obviously the leadership of

this particular committee.

I’m in the Sudan every year, so this isn’t a one shot for me. I’m

there every 8 months to a year. I was there before Darfur—people

knew where Darfur was, and I spent a lot of time in Sudan doing

different things. It’s a little bit different than what the political figures

usually do. I’m on the ground, and I’m on the ground not as

a United States Senator, although this time I kind of wore the hat

as a Senator going in and observing, but working with real people

who don’t have access to health care, and started going in about

six, seven months after Osama bin Laden left in the mid 1996,

1997.

Since then, having watched with admiration the way this administration

has addressed the North-South oversimplified conflict

under the leadership of the Secretary and Jack Danforth, our

former colleague, real progress, and we need to make absolutely

sure that we don’t lose sight of that as we go forward up through

the Darfur crisis.

We went several weeks ago into Chad where we did talk to the

refugees, went to a refugee camp called Touloum. There are many

refugee camps there, probably 20 or 30 at this juncture, have anywhere

from 10,000 to 20,000 refugees that have come in since February

of last year. They come in droves. I had the opportunity to

talk to lots of individuals who are being interviewed very appropriately

to determine whether or not from a legal standpoint this

meets the definition of genocide, which ties all sorts of legal—has

all sorts of legal implications to it.

The story is crystal clear. You go from refugee camp—refugee to

refugee camp within—refugee to refugee within a refugee camp,

like in Touloum, or to another refugee camp, and the story is exactly

the same, the way these villages are being wiped out, the way

that people in uniform come in, airplanes fly over, terrorize, scatter,

rape, pillage, burn down, support, direct support from the

janjaweed and the janjaweed getting support from the government.

I also went to Chad, which is a country most everybody in here

knows, but a lot of people around the world don’t know, but they

are going to know—Chad is the country right west where the refugees

are—and met with President Deby and went to Kenya and

met with President Kibaki there. And the story is exactly the same.

They understand regionally the implications of this conflict.

One dimension that I’d like to just add to the table that I wasn’t

aware of, having talked to scores and scores of the refugees who

have lost their family members and seen the slaughter that’s gone

on, that really didn’t come out as I traveled through southern

Sudan and met with the leadership, all eight Governors of the Sudanese

Peoples Liberation Movement there, is the potential for regional

instability that a crisis like this can cause, not just the humanitarian,

but regional instability with the sort of cleansing that

is going on.

And if you look in Ethiopia, if you look at Eritrea, comments are

being made about this particular tragedy, and I wasn’t aware before

I was there, but the huge regional implications that this tragedy

does indeed have. And then we’ll continue on down, because I

know a lot of people have comments and question—I want to commend

the administration for action thus far, but we need to be

much, much more aggressive.

In talking to the Sudanese Peoples Liberation Movement and in

talking to the leadership in Chad and in Kenya, the surrounding

countries, it is clear to me that the African Union can play a major

role. This is an African crisis, and though we do—I didn’t hear all

of your testimony—but provide 80 percent of the humanitarian effort,

and that is good, it’s not enough, and it’s not going to stop it.

So how far we go is what, I think, we need to be talking about

today at this juncture.

And second, it is an African problem that Africans want to address.

The African Union wants to address it. And I’m sure we’ll

get into the details of the 300, the task force. Are they being adequately

supported? Could there be—and I wrote in a Washington

Post editorial—a third, a third, a third, have a third of the forces

that make sure that there’s security, not just humanitarian aid,

but security, a third come from the Sudanese Peoples Liberation

Movement from the south, and a third come from Khartoum, and

a third from the rest of the African Union is a proposal which I

would at least put on the table.

With that, I very much appreciate the chance to recount some of

my observations, commend the administration, but we’ve got a lot

more to do.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.