



PRESS RELEASE

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Contact: Ivan Boothe, Director of Communications
(202) 481-8200, Communications@GenocideIntervention.net

SURVEY REVEALS DESPITE IRAQ, AMERICANS WANT UNITED STATES TO TAKE ACTION TO STOP GENOCIDE IN DARFUR

Awareness of Crisis Up Sharply Since 2004

Overwhelming Support for Mandatory Genocide Education in Public Schools

WASHINGTON, Feb. 1, 2007 — A new poll from the Genocide Intervention Network finds ending genocide is a high foreign policy priority for a majority of Americans. Despite the predominance of Iraq and terrorism in US media and foreign policy discussions, strong majorities feel that the United States should take action to bring about peace in Darfur, and favor doing so in cooperation with the international community.

The crisis in the Darfur region of Sudan, unanimously declared to be genocide by the US Congress in 2004, has claimed the lives of more than 400,000 civilians and displaced 2.5 million people. Genocidal militias are equipped and funded by the government of Sudan.

The poll was commissioned by the Genocide Intervention Network to determine the priority Americans place on ending the violence in Darfur, and support for specific means of doing so.

Among the 1,018 adults surveyed in the poll last December, nearly two-thirds (62 percent) believe taking action to stop humanitarian crisis like genocide should be a high (42 percent) or the highest (19 percent) foreign policy priority for the country. Among respondents who had heard “a lot” or “some” about Darfur previous to the poll, support climbs further to 71 percent.

The survey also indicates large changes in awareness about the conflict, the result of sustained campaigns, in particular by the Save Darfur Coalition. Over half of Americans — 59 percent — now say they know “a lot” or “some” about the conflict in Darfur, compared to levels reported in 2004, when a similar question commissioned by the Program on International Policy Attitudes found only 14 percent familiar with the conflict.

Americans want the United States to get involved to stop the genocide in Darfur:

- **Nearly two-thirds (62 percent) of Americans support the use of targeted individual sanctions**, including asset freezes and travel bans, against Sudanese leaders responsible for planning and executing genocide — even though respondents were told that some of these officials occasionally provide intelligence to the United States on al Qaeda activities.
- **Fifty-four percent of Americans support denying entry in US ports to oil tankers that have carried Sudanese oil.** Provisions for both targeted sanctions and port-entry denial have already been signed into law by the Darfur Peace and Accountability Act, but have not been enforced.

Americans want the United States to work with the international community:

- **Americans support cooperation between the US and the International Criminal Court (ICC)** to bring the perpetrators of the Darfur genocide to justice. A majority (53 percent) want the United States to help the ICC, even if there is a chance in the future its prosecutors may some day attempt to charge Americans with war crimes for their operations in Iraq and elsewhere.

Americans support multilateral — but not unilateral — military intervention:

- **A majority (50 percent) of Americans favor US military intervention in Darfur**, so long as it is part of an international peacekeeping force.
- **Americans are more reluctant to take military action if it is unilateral and potentially dangerous.** Nevertheless, a surprisingly large minority (37 percent) support even an aggressive US mission in Darfur that would require 10,000 US troops and a cost potentially exceeding one hundred American lives.

Americans want genocide education in public schools:

- **Four out of five (80 percent) of Americans support a policy of mandatory genocide education in US public schools**, believing that despite the other important topics schools must cover, they should also teach about genocide. Currently, only six US states require schools to teach about the Holocaust, and none require schools to teach about other genocides or mass atrocities.

The Genocide Intervention Network and its members advocate not for aggressive military intervention but rather the enforcement of the Darfur Peace and Accountability Act, passed by a bipartisan Congress last year and signed by President Bush. Important provisions include targeted individual sanctions against key architects of the genocide and denial of entry to ships that have carried Sudanese oil — a measure intended to dissuade oil companies from working with Sudan and helping to finance the country’s military spending.

“After countless rounds of broken promises, there is no reason to believe the government of Sudan will commit to a workable ceasefire and political settlement unless someone imposes a cost on leaders for continuing down the path of violence, particularly against civilians,” said Mark Hanis, executive director of the Genocide Intervention Network.

“Along with states divesting from Sudan, the punitive measures in the Darfur Peace and Accountability Act are our first options for imposing such a cost,” Hanis said. “After four years of failing to stop this genocide, we can no longer wait and hope things will get better.”

ABOUT THE POLL

This random-digit-dial telephone survey was conducted by Greenberg Quinlan Rosner. The survey reached 1,018 adults, 18 years or older. The data were weighted by gender, age, race, education, 2006 general election turnout and marital status to ensure an accurate reflection of the population. The survey was conducted December 14-17, 2006 and carries a margin of error of +/- 3.1 percentage points.

The results of the poll are available on the Genocide Intervention Network’s website:
www.GenocideIntervention.net/Poll

ABOUT THE GENOCIDE INTERVENTION NETWORK

The Genocide Intervention Network is working to build the first permanent anti-genocide constituency in the United States, mobilizing the political will to stop genocide when it occurs. Accessible online at www.GenocideIntervention.net, GI-Net empowers individuals with tools to stop genocide through education, fundraising for civilian protection and advocacy efforts.

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