

Testimony by Eric Reeves, Sudan Adviser to the “Olympic Dream for Darfur Campaign”

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“Darfur and the Olympics: A Call for International Action”

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Chairman Tierney and other distinguished Members of this Subcommittee:

As human security in Darfur and eastern Chad continues to deteriorate; as 4.5 million conflict-affected human beings face ongoing threats of violence, malnutrition, and disease; and as the world’s largest and most endangered humanitarian operation continues its critical work amidst intolerable levels of insecurity, we need to be asking with all possible urgency why there is no meaningful protection on the ground for these acutely vulnerable populations. Why is it that in the face of obdurate defiance by the National Islamic Front (National Congress Party) regime in Khartoum, the international community continues to accept a weak, demoralized, and crumbling African Union observer mission as the only source of civilian and humanitarian protection for Darfur? How can it be that as this brutalized region enters a fifth year of genocidal counter-insurgency warfare, the UN Security Council has failed so badly in its “responsibility to protect” civilians in Darfur and eastern Chad?

The past four years offer all too many answers, all too many instances of moral and political failure by a wide range of international actors. But no country has done more to support Khartoum than China; no country has offered more unstinting diplomatic support; no country has done more to provide the weaponry that fuels the engine of genocidal destruction; no country has done more to insulate Khartoum from economic pressure or human rights accountability.

That China is also poised to host the 2008 Summer Olympic Games gives to this hearing an extraordinary timeliness, and I hope in this extended testimony to suggest both a sense of the recent history of China’s role in Sudan as well as an outline of the opportunities presented for compelling China to accept the responsibilities that are incumbent upon any appropriate host of the Olympic Games.

CONTEXT

On August 31, 2006, the UN Security Council belatedly passed Resolution 1706, authorizing a peace support operation for Darfur consisting of 22,500 UN troops, civilian police, and Formed Police Units. The force was to deploy “rapidly” under Chapter VII of the UN Charter (which confers enforcement authority), with an explicit mandate to protect civilians as well as humanitarian and humanitarian operations. The force was also to establish a “multidimensional presence” to “improve the security situation in the neighboring regions along the borders between the Sudan and Chad and between the Sudan and the Central African Republic.” Urgently and robustly deployed, such a force could have done much to avert massive human displacement and destruction.

On the occasion of this resolution, one vote was of particular note: the abstention by the Permanent Representative of the People’s Republic of China. To be sure, there were abstentions by Qatar, representing the Arab League’s indifference to Darfur’s agony, and Russia, which has a highly lucrative arms trade with the Khartoum regime. But it was China’s vote that signaled to Khartoum that it would face no prospect of urgent or forceful implementation of Resolution 1706, that diplomatic protection would be afforded to the most destructive intransigence.

If we wish to understand why more than nine months after passage of Resolution 1706 fewer than 200 UN personnel have been deployed to Darfur, even as security continues to deteriorate and the African Union performs less and less effectively, then we must confront squarely the complicity of China in sustaining genocide by attrition in Darfur. For while China has learned the trick of mouthing meaningless words of concern, it presently holds fast to a course of rapacious indifference in Sudan. As host of the 2008 Summer Olympic Games, China must confront a clear and decisive choice: for it cannot legitimately host the premiere event in international sports while at the same time remaining complicit in the ultimate international crime.

WEAPONS TRANSFERS

China has over the past decade and more been the chief supplier of weapons, military supplies, and weapons technology to the Khartoum regime. The latter has enabled Khartoum to develop production capacity on a scale such

that it is now largely self-sufficient in small and medium-sized weapons, of the sort produced at facilities like the vast GIAD industrial complex outside of Khartoum. But Chinese transfers of helicopter gunships, MiG fighter aircraft, tanks, armored personnel carriers, heavy military trucks and artillery systems were all critical in Khartoum's savage military conduct during the north/south civil war, particularly in the oil regions where Chinese companies dominate the two producing oil consortia (in Eastern and Western Upper Nile Province).

Khartoum's profligate weapons purchases have continued, even as the regime-dominated economy labors under extraordinary external debt, now exceeding \$25 billion. Three years ago the purchase of a dozen highly advanced MiG-29's from Russia cost almost \$1 billion, and yet Khartoum's defense minister was recently in Moscow seeking yet more credit for purchase of helicopter gunships and other advanced aerial weapons systems.

Both China and Russia were recently cited in an Amnesty International report on Darfur that highlighted the irresponsible weapons transfers from these two countries, despite a UN weapons embargo:

"The bulk [of the military and related equipment] was transferred from China and Russia, two Permanent Members of the Security Council. The governments of these supplier countries have been, or should have been, aware through the published and unpublished reports of the UN Panel of Experts to the UN Sanctions Committee on Sudan as well as the detailed report by Amnesty International published in November 2004 that several types of military equipment including aircraft have been deployed by the Sudanese armed forces and militia for direct attacks on civilians and indiscriminate attacks in Darfur, as well as for logistical support for these attacks."

These aerial attacks on civilian targets are chronicled in immense and compelling detail in Amnesty's report, "Sudan: Arms continuing to fuel serious human rights violations in Darfur," May 8, 2007, Amnesty International Index: AFR 54/019/2007). Of particular concern are A-5 "Fantan" jets:

"Amnesty International is concerned that the Sudan Air Force has transferred these [A-5 "Fantan"] jet bombers to Darfur without authority from the UN Sanctions Committee and is highly likely to use these newly acquired jets, as it has other aircraft, and the acquisition of expertise to fly the jets supplied from China, for indiscriminate attacks in Darfur in violation of the UN arms embargo and international humanitarian law...."

Amnesty further reports that despite the February 2007 appeal from UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon (“I particularly deplore the aerial bombings by Sudanese government forces, which have expanded to new areas since 16 January [2007], resulting in more civilians casualties and suffering,”

“Between January 2007 and March 2007, Chinese A-5 ‘Fantan’ jet fighters were seen parked at Nyala airport. These aircraft are specifically designed to be used for ground attack operations. In early March a large bomb and some green ammunition boxes were seen next to the jets. In March 2007, a third A-5 ‘Fantan’ jet (reg. number 410) was seen at Nyala airport.”

Another Amnesty report on China’s international arms transfers, drawing on the work of a UN Panel of Experts on Darfur, highlights the shipment to Khartoum of Dong Feng military trucks:

“In Sudan in August 2005 a UN panel, which was investigating violations of the international arms embargo on Sudan, saw a shipment of green Dong Feng military trucks in the Port of Sudan. ‘New green trucks of a similar type were also seen on the Sudanese air force premises in Darfur in October.’ The investigations found that:

‘The Panel had begun a process trace in order to verify the end-user and final destination of the vehicles that were seen at Port Sudan. The investigation showed that a total of 222 vehicles (212 military trucks of model EQ2100E6D and 10 chassis workshop of model EQ1093F6D) were procured from Dongfeng Automobile Import and Export Limited in China, makers of military equipment and vehicles. The consignee was the Ministry of Finance and National Economy of the Sudan. Further reports received indicated that the vehicles were consigned on behalf of the Ministry of Defence.’” (“People’s Republic of China: Sustaining conflict and human rights abuses: The flow of arms accelerates,” June 11, 2006, Amnesty International Index: ASA 17/030/2006)

The end use of such vehicles, duplicitously imported from China?

“Throughout the massacres in Darfur in 2004, Amnesty International and other human rights monitors noted that military trucks were being used to transport both Sudanese military and Janjawid militia personnel, and in some cases to deliver people for extrajudicial execution. In April 2004, Amnesty International reported the extrajudicial execution of 168 people from Wadi Saleh, in the west

of Darfur, near the Chad border. The men were seized from 10 villages by a large force of soldiers, military intelligence officers and Janjawid militiamen, blindfolded and taken in groups of about 40 in army trucks to an area behind a hill near Deleij village. They were ordered to lie on the ground and were shot dead."

We have, in short, a vast amount of evidence that Chinese weaponry is directly involved in the Darfur genocide, and that the uses of this weaponry is certainly known by the government in Beijing. China has long provided weapons to Khartoum, even when the human costs have been clearly evident (for an overview of Chinese weapons transfers to Khartoum from 1995 to 1998, see "Arms Transfers to the Government of Sudan," Human Rights Watch [1998], <http://www.hrw.org/reports98/sudan/Sudarm988-05.htm>).

To all of this China's Foreign Ministry replies blandly, "in conducting arms sales to African, we carefully consider the local area's situation and development model and stick to the spirit of protecting local peace and stability" (Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Jiang Yu, reported by Associated Press [dateline: Beijing], May 8, 2007). Such transparent mendacity is certainly revealing of Chinese credibility in speaking about the Darfur crisis.

CHINA, SUDAN, AND OIL

Two weeks ago Bloomberg news-wire reported that China's monthly crude oil imports from Sudan had increased by 600% over the previous year, jumping to 222,000 barrels a day: "Sudan is China's sixth- largest supplier of oil this year, shipments rising more than fivefold to 25.8 million barrels" (May 25, 2007). Given the rapidly growing petroleum needs of the Chinese economy, and the enormous Chinese stake in Sudanese oil production, the geostrategic significance of Sudan could hardly be clearer. Sudan is the premier site for China's off-shore oil production, without a close rival. Off-shore oil production helps to insulate the Chinese economy from the consequences of rising, and sometimes spiking crude oil prices. Nothing does more to account for Chinese complicity in the massive scorched-earth clearances in southern Sudan during the latter stages of the north/south civil war (see below).

China imports approximately two-thirds of Sudan's oil exports (precise figures for production, revenues, and export are deliberately obscured by the Khartoum regime in an effort to deny Southern Sudan its rightful portion of oil revenues under the wealth-sharing protocol of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement

[Nairobi, January 9, 2005]). These revenues in turn have sustained the weapons purchases that have fueled genocidal destruction in the marginalized areas of Sudan for years---in the oil regions of Southern Sudan and southern Kordofan Province, in Southern Blue Nile, in the eastern provinces, and most conspicuously and massively in Darfur.

CAPITAL AND COMMERCIAL INVESTMENT

Despite its considerable oil wealth (crude petroleum exports began in August 1999), the Khartoum-dominated economy, as noted above, is deeply indebted. Oil revenues alone are not sufficient to sustain the economy, certainly not given profligate weapons purchases and extraordinary devotion of national resources to genocidal counter-insurgency war in Darfur and a continuing massive military presence in southern Sudan. The economy requires substantial commercial and capital investments from European and Asian multinational corporations. The American-led divestment campaign has successfully forced several European companies to suspend all economic activity in Sudan pending the halting of genocide in Darfur (most notably, Rolls-Royce Marine, Siemens [Germany], ABB Ltd. [Switzerland]). But Asian companies, particularly those of China, continue to do business as usual with Khartoum, even if the consequences of their business practices are enormously destructive, and further insulate the regime from international economic pressure.

China's economic and trade relationship with the Khartoum-dominated economy continues to grow substantially, even as China has for years invested heavily in Sudan, particularly in the petroleum sector. China was the primary partner in building the oil pipeline from southern Sudan to Port Sudan (completed 1999) and dominates road construction in the oil regions, primarily Eastern and Western Upper Nile. These roads have been constructed without regard for environmental impact or the indigenous economy, which depends upon cattle and cattle migration. The roads are typically constructed without culverts, which ensures flooding during the rainy season; the roads also block many traditional migratory routes for cattle, with deeply disruptive effects.

Moreover, during their construction these roads were often the sites of brutal scorched-earth clearances. Road construction displaced countless tens of thousands of civilians, often violently, with tremendous human destruction. During the north-south conflict, airstrips belonging to the oil development consortia, and involving Chinese construction, were frequently used by Khartoum's military aircraft, including deadly helicopter gunships. These

fearsome weapons of human destruction have been implicated in hundreds of deadly attacks on civilian, even humanitarian targets. For example, in the village of Bieh (Western Upper Nile) the UN reported on February 21, 2002 a savage attack by helicopter gunships on women and children gathered to receive from the UN's World Food Program:

“A Sudanese army helicopter fired five rockets at thousands of civilians at a UN food distribution point, leaving 17 people dead, World Food Program officials and Sudanese rebels said Thursday. [] ‘Such attacks, deliberately targeting civilians about to receive humanitarian aid, are absolutely and utterly unacceptable,’ WFP chief Catherine Bertini said in a statement. ‘This attack---the second of this kind in less than two weeks---is an intolerable affront to human life and humanitarian work.’” (Associated Press [dateline: Nairobi], February 21, 2002)

It is important to realize that although Sudan is the largest country in Africa---the size of the United States east of the Mississippi River---only a Delaware-sized sliver of land in the Nile River Valley (essentially Khartoum, Omdurman, and their suburbs) sees the benefit of these vast commercial and capital investments. Southern Sudan, Darfur, the deeply impoverished eastern Provinces, and indeed all the severely economically marginalized areas of Sudan see virtually no benefit from foreign investment. The assertion by China that “growth through investment” will lift all of Sudan out of poverty is profoundly belied by the Khartoum regime's ruthless arrogation of national wealth and power, and its total control of political discourse by means of a viciously efficient security apparatus.

For example, projects such as the Merowe Dam in far northern Sudan, with China as the major contractor and financier, will benefit the Khartoum region; but there is no national grid with which to share the electricity that will be produced, even as the people of Merowe region will see nothing but displacement, often into uninhabitable terrain. Built on the fourth cataract of the Nile River, the Merowe Dam is arguably the most environmentally irresponsible construction project in all of Africa. A farming population of more than 50,000 people is being moved forcibly, and without remotely adequate compensation, from the fertile Nile River bank to some of the most arid regions of Bayouda and Nubia. Those resisting the project have been dealt with brutally, with complicity on the part of China's work force and security personnel.

China's commercial and capital investments in Sudan reflect no benign "alternative model" of engagement, no enlightened economic partnership, but a callous willingness to do business with the most corrupt and repressive regimes if the perceived benefits are great enough.

China has recently attempted to suggest that it is throttling back subsidized investment in Sudan, but cosmetic announcements of this sort are belied by Chinese leadership in huge capital projects. In February 2007 China Railway Engineering Group and China Railway Erju Company Ltd were awarded a \$1.15 billion contract to construct a railway link between Khartoum and Port Sudan on the Red Sea. This will facilitate yet larger investment in the Khartoum and the surrounding region, but does nothing to address the desperate need for transportation infrastructure in the rest of Africa's largest country.

CHINA'S DIPLOMATIC SUPPORT FOR KHARTOUM

Despite Khartoum's resolute defiance of the international community, despite its clear violation of various agreements and commitments made over the past four years, China refuses to countenance any UN sanctions measure. It hardly helps here that the European Union, and the individual countries of Europe, have been so consistently unhelpful in pressuring Khartoum. But there are at least signs that Europe will move in the near term.

As far as China is concerned, however, senior diplomat Li Junjua made clear last week that Beijing has no intention of allowing for diplomatic progress on any sanctions measures at the UN: "We never, ever believe that sanctions would contribute a lot to move the situation, no matter in Sudan or in other cases,' [Li] said" (Associated Press [dateline: United Nations], May 29, 2007). These comments echoed those of Liu Guijin, China's new special envoy on Africa: "Willful sanctions and simply applying pressure are not conducive to the solution of the problem,' Liu [said on] Tuesday [May 29, 2007]" (AHN [dateline: Beijing], May 30). In only slightly more diplomatic fashion, China's UN ambassador echoed these sentiments yet again, declaring that possible UN sanctions would be "quite unfortunate," this at the same time that Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Jiang Yu declared in Beijing that "new sanctions against Sudan would only complicate the issue" (Reuters [dateline: Beijing], May 31, 2007). This line of argument has been consistently articulated by Beijing for months: in January the New York Times reported from Shanghai on the comments of Assistant Foreign Minister Zhai Jun: "Using pressure and

imposing sanctions is not practical and will not help settle the issue” (January 25, 2007).

The upshot of these various, consistent, and highly authoritative remarks is clear: sanctions of any sort, indeed even an expanded arms embargo, will not survive a Chinese veto at the Security Council in the present diplomatic climate. To be sure, Lord David Triesman, British minister for African affairs, this week claimed to have seen evidence to the contrary; but unsurprisingly Lord Triesman was unable to offer any details of the discussions that led him to his conclusion that “China would not block new UN sanctions” against Khartoum (Bloomberg, June 4, 2007). Certainly Lord Triesman’s record, and that of the British Foreign Office in general, in predicting either developments in Darfur or UN responses to the catastrophe has been appallingly bad.

Moreover, if unwilling to impose expanded sanctions, even highly targeted sanctions, China will most certainly be unwilling to move beyond counseling “restraint and patience” in responding to the urgent security crisis on the ground in Darfur and eastern Chad. No matter that China voted for UN Security Council Resolution 1674 (April 2006), which explicitly endorsed an international “responsibility to protect” civilians endangered in precisely the fashion we see presently in Darfur and eastern Chad. The “responsibility to protect” was articulated formally at the UN World Summit (September 2005), and was supported by all UN member nations, who declared themselves

"prepared to take collective action, in a timely and decisive manner, through the Security Council, in accordance with the UN Charter, including Chapter VII, on a case by case basis and in cooperation with relevant regional organizations as appropriate, should peaceful means be inadequate and national authorities manifestly failing to protect their populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing, and crimes against humanity and its implications, bearing in mind the principles of the Charter and international law." (UN World Summit Outcome Document, paragraph 139)

For China, agreeing to this language was pure expediency, a grimly apt precedent for its present unctuous words of concern about Darfur.

For its part, assured that China will not allow UN sanctions to be imposed, and conscious of China’s tacit support for Khartoum’s own efforts in forestalling indefinitely the deployment of the so-called “African Union/UN hybrid

operation,” the National Islamic Front regime remains confident that a grim genocide by attrition will yield an ultimate, if ghastly victory in Darfur.

Rebel groups remain badly divided, even as Khartoum relentlessly bombs the sites where rebel leaders convene in an effort to hammer out a common negotiating position. A key rebel leader and humanitarian coordinator, Suleiman Jamous, languishes in a hospital prison in Kadugli (Kordofan) at the insistence of the Khartoum’s most intransigent génocidaires---this precisely because Jamous might be an effective and conciliatory elderly statesman during rebel talks. There is much to fault the rebels for, primarily the forces of Minni Minawi---the only signatory to the ill-conceived and ill-fated Darfur Peace Agreement (Abuja, Nigeria; May 2006). But in the absence of pressure on Khartoum, we will see no meaningful negotiations emerge, nor an end to efforts to disrupt the rebel efforts to coalesce. To all this China remains indifferent.

CURRENT ASSESSMENTS OF AND BY CHINA

Jan Egeland, the heroic former UN Undersecretary for Humanitarian Affairs, recently declared forcefully that China must do more to halt the human destruction and suffering in Darfur, lamenting that he had not spent more time pressuring Beijing. Egeland may be right, but this honest self-assessment comes only in hindsight. Few believed during Egeland’s tenure that China could be made to play a responsible role in responding to Darfur’s agony.

But as the Summer 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing loom ever closer, the vulnerability of China to international pressure has become commensurately clearer. For despite its gross misrepresentation of the security and humanitarian situation in Darfur, Beijing is well aware of the terrible realities that define the region, including eastern Chad. And as much as China values its economic relationship with Khartoum, including its lucrative arms trade and the extraordinary value it places on Sudanese oil production and exploration, it values its hosting of the Olympic Games more.

This is one reason we are seeing small, but so far only symbolic gestures on the part of China. Publicly China has urged Khartoum to be more “flexible” in accepting UN peace support personnel under the “AU/UN hybrid” scheme, which has so far proved to a tale of confusion, backtracking, disarray, and highly dilatory negotiations. China has expended a great deal more effort in explaining publicly the “history” of the Darfur genocide, but this explanation could in the main easily have been borrowed from Khartoum’s own Darfur

propaganda guide-book. A special envoy for Africa has been appointed, Liu Guijin, and he has been given Darfur as his primary brief. But his recent visit to Darfur was merely a second Chinese airbrushing of genocidal realities:

“Liu Guijin, China's new troubleshooter on Africa, defended Chinese investment in Sudan on Tuesday as a better way to stop the bloodshed in Darfur. He said he saw no desperation in refugee camps in Darfur during a visit last week and found that international and Sudanese groups were working together to solve humanitarian problems there. ‘I didn't see a desperate scenario of people dying of hunger, Liu said at a media briefing. Rather, he said, people in Darfur thanked him for the Chinese government's help in building dams and providing water supply equipment. ‘The Darfur issue and issues in eastern Sudan and southern Sudan are caused by poverty and underdevelopment.’” (Associated Press, May 29, 2007)

No mention is made of China's critical role in consolidating the Khartoum's tyrannical stranglehold upon national wealth and power. No mention is made of the desperate insecurity prevalent in so many of the camps, or the growing epidemic of rape, or increasing rates of malnutrition highlighted recently by UNICEF, or the continuing decline of the African Union as a protection force.

Earlier, Assistant Foreign Minister Zhai Jun had reported on the results of his own sanitized visit to three particularly well-controlled camps in Darfur (here from a transcript of the Chinese Foreign Ministry, Beijing, April 12, 2007):

“My general impression is that the current situation in Darfur is basically stable, the local government runs normally, the refugees camps are well managed with sound health conditions and the basic living of refugees is guaranteed. [] According to the local people, the security situation in Darfur is generally improved, especially after the signing of the Darfur Peace Agreement and crimes decreased considerably.”

This gross misrepresentation of current realities is purely propagandistic in nature. It sends a clear signal to Khartoum that whatever China is obliged to say under international pressure about the Darfur crisis, there is as yet no willingness to respond consequentially to the extraordinarily dire assessments offered by humanitarian and human rights groups, as well as by the intrepid journalists who still reveal new and shocking examples of insecurity, violence, and human destruction in Darfur and eastern Chad. The camps themselves have become increasingly violent and dangerous, ever more heavily armed, even as

they are seething cauldrons of rage and despair. China's profound misrepresentation of the security and humanitarian crisis is one of the most consequential elements of Beijing's complicity in the Darfur genocide.

Thus it is particularly dismaying to see the Beijing regime rewarded by various senior officials from the US, the UK, and the UN. Andrew Natsios, the incongruously part-time US special envoy for Sudan, recently declared:

“‘There is a lot of China-bashing in the West,’ said US special envoy to Sudan, Andrew Natsios, who in January praised China’s ‘positive role.’ He told a US Senate panel that China’s ‘subtle diplomacy’ had supplemented, not undermined, the policy of sanctions against Sudan.” (Deutsche Presse Agentur [dateline: Beijing], May 21, 2007)

It seems not to trouble Natsios that there is no “sanctions policy” toward Khartoum over Darfur. The US expended virtually all its leverage in this arena with President Clinton’s imposition of comprehensive trade and economic sanctions in November 1997. President Bush’s recently announced “sanctions” (May 29, 2007) were little more than symbolic, as Natsios himself was forced to admit to *The Guardian* (May 30, 2007). There are no UN sanctions, nor has the European Union yet found the political will to impose sanctions (a number of European multinational corporations still do business as usual with Khartoum).

Of course Natsios can’t provide any of the details of China’s putatively “positive role” or its “subtle diplomacy”---for the very good reason that they do not exist. Natsios has found it expedient to suggest that China is helpful because US foreign policy within the Bush administration has no desire to elevate the significance of the Darfur crisis within the bilateral relationship between China and the US. Natsios’ part-time status and lack of diplomatic experience is a perverse symbol of the real tenor of Bush administration commitment on Darfur, Sudan, and in confronting Beijing on “non-strategic” issues such as genocide in Africa.

British Foreign Secretary Margaret Beckett has recently been quoted offering similarly fatuous words of “encouragement” about China’s role in Darfur:

“‘On Sudan, I know there has been some criticism of China, but actually China has played really quite a positive role, particularly in the negotiation of the Darfur peace agreement,’ the foreign secretary said. ‘China, along with all the

rest of the international community, very much regrets that that peace agreement has not been honoured by the government of Sudan, or indeed necessarily by the rebels.” (Financial Times [dateline: Beijing], May 18, 2007)

As the Financial Times tartly noted, “Mrs Beckett's comments will be particularly welcome in Beijing, which has reacted sharply to criticism over its record on Sudan and is highly sensitive to anything that could undermine its Olympic preparations.”

This polite but preposterous rendering of China's role in Sudan, and Beckett's failure to acknowledge the abject failure of the Darfur Peace Agreement, in which China played no significant diplomatic role, may play well in Beijing--- and serve to advance UK/China relations in other quarters. But it is a distortion that only hurts the people of Darfur by further emboldening both Beijing and thus Khartoum. Crediting China for a role it simply has not played ensures that it will be all the more difficult to move China to a constructive posture in securing access for peace support personnel, and in pressuring Khartoum to engage in good faith peace talks with the non-signatory rebel groups.

Jan Eliasson, the UN Secretary-General's special envoy for Darfur, has also bewilderingly praised China's “positive role” (remarks to the Atlantic Council's Globe Leadership Series, Washington, DC; May 16, 2007). Eliasson declared that “the Chinese pushed the Sudanese government to accept the UN so-called heavy support package, another 3,000 peacekeepers to come to Darfur. And they were definitely active on that one.”

But of course Khartoum has so far given only ambiguous lip-service to accepting the “heavy support package,” which is most certainly not “another 3,000 peacekeepers”: it is a package of logistics, communications, and other technical personnel that makes sense only in the context of a very large follow-on military force of a sort that Khartoum has not yet begun to discuss, indeed has so far rejected out of hand if it includes UN (as opposed to exclusively AU) troops. The “heavy support package” provides for no infantry units and can do nothing on its own to increase in significant ways the security so desperately needed on the ground in Darfur and eastern Chad. The UN's Eliasson seems intent on contriving reasons for praising China rather than confronting the uncomfortable facts of Beijing's continued diplomatic protectionism and complicity in arming Khartoum and its military proxies in Darfur.

THE WAY FORWARD

The Games are Beijing's "post-Tiananmen Square coming out party," the occasion for the regime to take what it believes is its rightful place of preeminence on the world stage. And though certainly anticipating protests over its cultural and physical destruction of Tibet, its own appalling human rights abuses, and its scandalous environmental record, the Chinese government clearly did not see Darfur as a major source of international embarrassment. And yet as the narrative of the 2008 Games begins to unfold, the central role of Darfur could not be clearer, nor the choice before China more decisive: either China uses its unrivaled leverage with the Khartoum regime to secure access for an international force capable of taking on a mandate to protect civilians and humanitarians, or a shaming campaign will grow relentlessly in scope, power, and visibility. There is no "third way," no alternative means for Beijing to secure legitimacy for its hosting of the 2008 Olympic Games.

Even so, there are various incremental steps China can take to show its determination to make good on its declared commitment to an international "responsibility to protect" endangered civilians:

- Press publicly for Khartoum to keep its multiple commitments to disarm the brutal Janjaweed militias that are responsible for so much civilian destruction; such disarmament was also the key "demand" of UN Security Council Resolution 1556 (July 2004), on which China voted;
- Press publicly for Khartoum to adhere to ceasefire commitments previously made;
- Suspend all weapons transfers to Sudan;
- Suspend debt forgiveness to the Khartoum-dominated economy;
- Join with UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon in publicly demanding a cessation of aerial bombardment of civilians targets, and the indiscriminate use of aerial military assets;
- Join with UN Undersecretary for Humanitarian Affairs John Holmes and numerous aid organizations in publicly demanding unfettered humanitarian access to all regions of Darfur;

- Publicly announce punitive actions that China is prepared to take in the event that Khartoum refuses to accept an international peace support operation, refuses to disarm the Janjaweed, impedes or harasses humanitarian efforts, or refuses to halt indiscriminate aerial attacks.

But public declarations and demands are not sufficient: China will only begin the process of expending the necessary diplomatic, political, and economic capital in making such declarations and demands. China---having so long served to insulate Khartoum from international pressure---must accelerate the process by which an adequate UN peace support operation, of the sort contemplated in UN Security Council Resolution 1706, is actually deployed. Only with the deployment of such a force should the campaign to target China be suspended.

In pushing for these goals, advocacy efforts have in the main rightly steered away from a counter-productive boycott campaign, and instead articulated clear goals that will be relentlessly pursued by a wide range of international civil society groups and constituencies. A boycott would be immensely divisive of these international efforts, and would punish Olympic athletes as well as those who rightly celebrate the Games as a symbol of international cooperation and good will. In the end, a boycott is little more than a crude “referendum,” with a vote that will surely be in China’s favor. A boycott works to end discourse, and instead becomes a political end in itself.

Much better, much more effective is the campaign to create an ongoing international platform for sustained and critical discussion of China’s role in Sudan---a platform of precisely the sort China so rigorously denies domestically. The task then is to continue to highlight the terrible contradiction between Beijing’s hosting the premier international sports event and Chinese complicity in the ultimate international crime, genocide. There must be an unrelenting and omni-present message to Beijing: “Bring the Olympic Dream to Darfur.” At present, China’s Olympic slogan---“One world, one dream”---excludes with painful irony Darfur’s ongoing nightmare. There can be no legitimacy for these Olympic Games with this ghastly contradiction at their core; if genocide in Darfur continues into August of 2008, history will rightly record these as the “Genocide Olympics.”