

DR. CAROLINE LUCAS
Green Party

for the South East of England

Lord Triesman
Foreign & Commonwealth Office
King Charles St
London
SW1A 2AH

February 1st 2006

Dear Minister,

An estimated 400,000 people have been murdered in Darfur during recent years and 90% of black African villages have been ethnically cleansed - whilst the international community has sat by and watched. I recognize that pressure from the UK government has brought about small but important changes in relation to the policies adopted by the authorities in Khartoum. However, I believe that more than ever the time is right to take more decisive action.

The African Union is struggling to keep its monitoring programme in the region afloat. Only a few weeks ago it warned that the peace mission in Darfur may be forced to close because of lack of funds. It is also advocating UN intervention in the region, despite ongoing opposition to such a move by the Sudanese government. I understand that Kofi Annan has called for plans to deploy a Western-backed rapid reaction force to Darfur.

Of particular concern is the sexual violence that women and children are subject to by the militia. Forced to leave the relative safety of their homes to collect firewood, women are incredibly vulnerable to attack, whilst the cultural taboos surrounding rape and other sexual violence means that many crimes go unreported and their victims are unable to access medical or psychological support.

I am calling on the UK government to do more to end the nightmare that unfolds each day for women and children in Darfur. Specifically, please ensure that the following are prioritised:

- The enforcement of the no-fly zone agreed by the Sudan Government and the Darfur rebels.
- The holding to account of the Sudan Government for breaches of international law.
- Sufficient resources and support for the African Union presence in Darfur, including communications and logistical equipment, and a Chapter 7 mandate enabling the AU to protect civilians, and deter attacks by militia and rebel forces.
- The provision of fuel-efficient stoves so that the need to collect firewood is reduced.
- Medical treatment for sexually transmitted diseases and rape counselling need to be made widely available, as recommended by Medecins Sans Frontiers.

Above all, please support the UN in taking tough action against the government of Sudan for its behaviour in Darfur. It is widely recognised that the authorities in Khartoum are behind the attacks on Darfur, so they must be approached as architects of genocide rather than partners in a peace process.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Caroline Lucas". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Caroline Lucas - Green Party MEP for South East England.