

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

May 18, 2009

The Honorable Hillary Clinton
Secretary of State
U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20520

Dear Secretary Clinton,

Five years after the conflict in Darfur captured the attention of the international community, the conflict continues unabated. A litany of United Nations resolutions, sanctions, arrest warrants, and multiple summits have all failed to secure a viable regional peace. With the expulsion of 13 international and 3 domestic non-governmental aid organizations (NGOs), the lives of millions of Darfuris hang in the balance. Moreover, near the border of Darfur, in Eastern Chad, violations of humanitarian law and international human rights continue to escalate, and violators operate in an environment of almost total impunity. Additionally, inter-ethnic conflict and raids by Chadian armed opposition groups have added to the insecurity of the region and exacerbated already bad working conditions for the remaining humanitarian workers in both Chad and Darfur.

Analysts, policy makers, and experts now agree that the conflicts in Chad and Sudan have mutually reinforcing dynamics. Chad's internal political instability is having devastating consequences on the peace processes in Sudan and the Central African Republic (CAR). The U.N. Security Council Sanctions Committee Panel of Experts on Sudan stated in November 2008 that Chad supports Sudanese insurgent groups with arms, ammunition, vehicles, food, training, and safe haven. Likewise, the Government of Sudan is widely reported to support Chadian rebel groups that seek the overthrow of the Chadian government. Further, the U.S. Department of State, in its 2008 Human Rights Report on Chad, documents grievous human rights abuses and unlawful killings by Chadian government officials.

We therefore encourage you, as the Administration continues to formulate its policy and approach toward Sudan, to also develop an explicit policy on Chad that will complement those efforts. Such a policy should take into account a number of factors, among them: efforts to forge a credible Chad peace process among all stakeholders to the conflict, support for peacekeeping troops mandated by the U.N., strict attention to the needs of the thousands of Sudanese refugees and Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), and a commitment to strengthening democratic institutions, respect for human rights and rule of law. The importance of Chad within the regional context cannot be overstated, nor can the necessity of addressing the root causes of conflict within Chad as a step toward

assuring greater stability for all affected countries. For too long, Chad has been treated more as an ancillary detail than an essential piece of U.S. engagement in Africa.

The U.S. has shown dedication over the years in addressing the devastating humanitarian crisis in both Eastern Chad and Sudan's Darfur region. Our interests will only be strengthened by elaborating a broader agenda that considers Chad not only through the lens of Darfur, but as a nation with its own internal political crisis that heavily affects a troubled region. An ideal approach would work in parallel with U.S. strategy in Sudan and seek the long-term stability of the region. We look forward to working with you to ensure U.S. recognition of the importance of Chad.

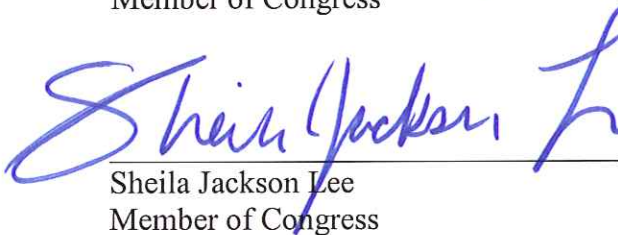
Sincerely,



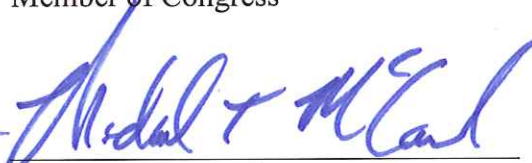
Michael E. Capuano
Member of Congress



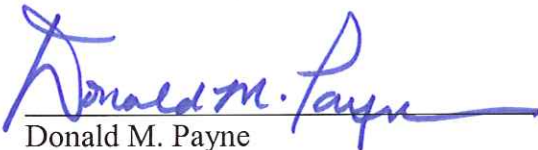
Frank R. Wolf
Member of Congress



Sheila Jackson Lee
Member of Congress



Michael T. McCaul
Member of Congress



Donald M. Payne
Member of Congress



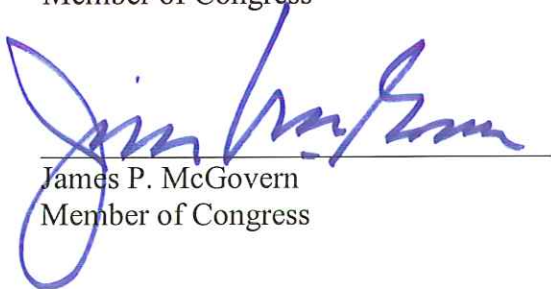
Harry E. Mitchell
Member of Congress



Bill Pascrell, Jr.
Member of Congress



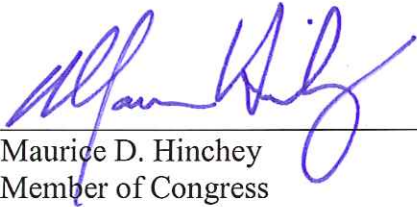
Barbara Lee
Member of Congress



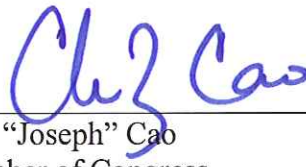
James P. McGovern
Member of Congress



John Lewis
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Maurice D. Hinchey
Member of Congress



Anh "Joseph" Cao
Member of Congress



Brad Miller
Member of Congress



James P. Moran
Member of Congress



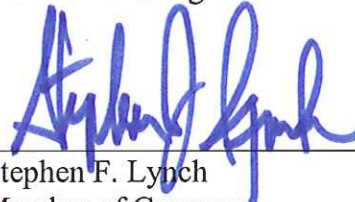
Ileana Ros-Lehtinen
Member of Congress



Christopher H. Smith
Member of Congress



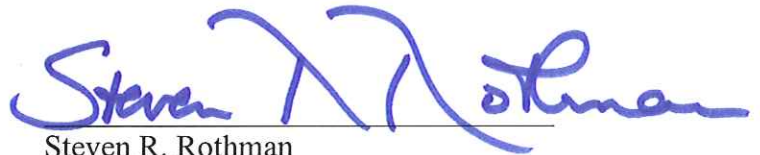
Scott Garrett
Member of Congress



Stephen F. Lynch
Member of Congress



David Reichert
Member of Congress



Steven R. Rothman
Member of Congress



James R. Langevin
Member of Congress

cc: Ambassador Johnnie Carson, Assistant Secretary for African Affairs