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LA CITY DIVESTMENT and the YOUTH OF JWW

One of the main emphases of Jewish World Watch is its program to educate young people about the genocide in Darfur, Sudan. At JWW Member, Temple Israel of Hollywood's Day School, the 6th grade was educated by a representative of Jewish World Watch, after which the class decided to take direct action. They met with LA City Council President Eric Garcetti and urged the LA City Council to take a stand against Genocide. Below is the Testimony delivered by four Temple Israel of Hollywood 6th graders delivered at the Los Angeles City Council on May 26, 2006 in support of the LA City Council Anti-Genocide Resolution (link to resolution which is already on the site). Following the testimony of the students, the Council unanimously adopted the Resolution to support the Sudan divestment bill pending in the state legislature (AB 2941), and committed themselves to divesting LA City pension funds as well.

1. Noah Levan

My name is Noah Levan. I am here to represent my classmates, my school, and kids all around the world. I have come here to talk about a non-violent way of stopping the genocide in Darfur. I may be a kid. But when our country is so caught up in its own affairs, who do we have to step forward to take a lead? Kids!

Kids like me need to speak out for the kids, adults and families in Darfur because they need our help. The kids in Darfur live in constant fear. Even going out of their village is risking their lives. In our country, kids worry about things like grades, clothes, even having the right iPod. We never even think about being starved, raped or killed. Other people should never have to think about these things. We aren't the only people in this world. We, as a city, have to set an example for all the people in the world. No matter how many miles separate us, we are still part of this world. Everyone has to take care of each other. Our class has done so many things. We held bake sales and car washes, sold wrist bands, and met with Councilman Eric Garcetti. Now we are here. It is Los Angeles' turn to step forward. Please pass this resolution to take a first step in stopping the genocide in Darfur. Kids in Darfur need our help and kids here in Los Angeles need your help to **never again** let this happen!

2. Benjamin Fried

City Council members ladies and gentleman, my name is Benjamin Fried. I am here today to represent my 6th grade class at Temple Israel of Hollywood Day School to show our support for the Divestment Bill, regarding the situation in the Sudan. My

classmates and I have been doing everything we can this past year to raise awareness of the genocide in Darfur and to raise what ever funds we could for the humanitarian efforts to help. Millions of people are at risk in Darfur every day. It is estimated that more than 400,000 civilians have died. 2 million people have been forced from their homes. Villages are being bombed by air and attacked by government supported militia groups. Woman and girls are being viciously raped. Villages are burned, and children must watch their relatives being killed everyday in the most horrible ways. My classmates and I feel a real responsibility to speak out and make people listen and not look the other way. You see, we are the third generation of another genocide called the Holocaust. Many of us, like myself are the grandchildren of Holocaust survivors. We were told over and over again to never forget. We know in our hearts we can't sit back when the world allows people to be evil against one another and do nothing. 12 million people of all backgrounds and religions died because the world looked the other way. The Divestment Bill may not seem like a lot when there is so much that needs to happen, but every way we can help is more than what's happening already and it sets a good example. It shows that we care. We are asking the City Council to show us that you care too and that you're not looking the other way. Helping pass this bill is a way of helping all of us say "Never Again"

3. Natan Reches

Ladies and Gentlemen of the Council, I ask for your attention and for your patience. I am here today to ask for your help, help to make a difference. Why do I ask for your help? I ask because I am a small voice that wants to be heard in a crowd of big voices. You are those big voices. All of them together will be heard as a one gargantuan voice. That voice can make more of a difference than 1,2,3 even 4 of my voices. Darfur is in need of help and you can give it. The Janjaweed are killing the people of Darfur each and every day. They are raping the women and teaching the children to kill their own people or be killed. After the Holocaust, we, as people swore that never again would humans slaughter fellow human. Never again would people starve and suffer. Never again would we stand idly by and not do something about it. Of course I know that there have been many disasters this past year such as Hurricane Katrina, but those were natural disasters. Those could not have been prevented. The genocide in Darfur could have been prevented. I am sure some of you are wondering how this affects us. My answer to that is simple. We as people are judged by our religious, our color and our ethnicity. These are barriers that hide the fact that we were all created in the image of G-d and that we are all part of the human race. My class and I have done a big part in trying to help Darfur. We have

raised money by washing cars, holding a bake sale and selling rubber bracelets. We also participated in a letter writing campaign called 1 Million Postcards! The letters were sent to President Bush addressing the issue. It is now your turn to help. On behalf of Temple Israel of Hollywood Day School, I would like to thank you all for your time and patience. I feel that my classmates and I have been heard and we feel that we have made a difference.

4. Raquel Seliktar

Hello my my name is Raquel Seliktar I am one of the representatives of the Temple Israel of Hollywood Day School 6th grade. We are all aware of the natural disasters that have been going on in the past year, like the Tsunami and Hurricane Katrina. The kind of disaster i will be talking about is a different kind, this disaster is sadly caused by humans. More than 300,000 people in Darfur have been killed and some raped. To have an idea of how many people have been killed and raped, just imagine killing all the people that attended the latest immigration march, but double that. The cause of all this pain and suffering is not a new one. Throughout history, many ethnic and religious groups have suffered segregation and have seen the eyes of evil through the murders of their loved ones. The men that are responsible for all these murders in Darfur are called the Jan jaw weid, they destroy entire towns and families. The people who are lucky enough to survive are sent to refugee camps, even there they are still not safe. My community is helping not only as jews because we know what it's like to have people of your race being killed but because as being a human helping an other human in need. Please help stop this cruel and animalistic act of violence. Help me feel proud of helping other people, and feeling proud of my state government.