



DO NOT STAND IDLY BY

SAVE  
DARFUR

Statement by Janice Kamenir-Reznik, President  
Jewish World Watch  
September 25, 2006

We applaud Governor Schwarzenegger for signing AB 2941 into law. Today California has acted against genocide. We are proud of our State for taking bold action against the on-going genocide in Darfur.

Jewish World Watch is a Los Angeles based coalition of 44 synagogues with a combined membership reach of around 150,000 people. The singular mission of this organization is to assume responsibility to educate and activate the community against genocide; our singular focus is the genocide in Darfur and our purpose is to help build the political will necessary to empower the leaders of our country to take all reasonable and necessary steps to protect the innocents of the world from the ugly hands of ethnic and religious cleansing and horrific bigotry. Our organization is guided by the notion that one's failure to act in the face of evil makes one an accomplice to the evil. That is why we have supported AB 2941 from the start, and why we helped to gather thousands of postcards which we presented to Governor Schwarzenegger urging his signing of AB 2941.

As seems clear, few political strategies exist that are heard or heeded by the government of Khartoum. Economic pressure remains one of the few remaining tools that may actually influence this brutal regime to stop the killing. Over the last three years, more than 400,000 Black African Muslims in Darfur have been killed, and 2-3 million have been displaced. The refugee camps are filled with women, almost all of whom have seen at least one their children murdered and whose husbands have been castrated and killed, frequently in front of them. Ninety percent (90%) of the women of Darfur have reportedly been raped by the Janjaweed, the government's proxy militia force.

The Jewish community abhors divestment campaigns—the reason being, that all too often they are used unfairly and unjustly against Israel. However, we must not desist from using this very important weapon solely because there are those who misuse or abuse it. For this remedy to be appropriately invoked, the claim of inhumanity must not be specious or politically motivated. Rather, the claim MUST be grounded in a moral imperative to save lives and to not stand idly by, indifferent to the death of innocent civilians. Certainly, where genocide is being perpetrated, as is the case with Sudan, there should be no question about the propriety of invoking the remedy of divestment.

JWW believes that relative to Sudan, the divestment tool is not only morally appropriate, but is indeed, a moral imperative. Hence, JWW has supported the targeted divestment campaign calling for the Regents of University of California to divest from Sudan in addition to supporting AB 2941.

Today is a proud day for California. Today, a unified California not only spoke out against genocide, but also took action against a particular genocide. And, the action taken will surely save lives. We thank the California Legislature, the Regents of the University of California, and Governor Schwarzenegger.