



ACTIVIST CERTIFICATION AND TRAINING

ADVOCATE HANDBOOK

Earning your ACT Advocate Tag, the second step towards your Youth Activist Certification, means working towards convincing people in power – both at home and internationally – that genocide is not an issue that can be ignored.

We've divided this handbook into two specific sections – Introduction to Advocacy and Sample Projects. The first section will teach you how to assess your own power and take you through analyzing who has the power to make major change in Darfur. The second section will take you step-by-step through three sample projects: Organizing a petition or letter-writing campaign, holding a Congressional meeting, or organizing a rally/protest.



INTRODUCTION TO ADVOCACY

You've probably heard the word "advocate" a million times. Advocates influence people in power to create long-term change. This means that advocates have a good deal of power themselves.

Think back just to US history and you can see evidence of advocacy creating change everywhere: women's rights advocates lobbying to secure voting rights for women; civil rights activists voting for equal rights for minorities; unions lobbying for worker's rights. Without activists lobbying for change, women wouldn't be able to vote, segregation would still be a reality, and some people (even children) would be forced to work grueling long days in unbearable and dangerous conditions.

So let's re-think power for a second here. Power isn't something that just the leaders of the world have. Remember, the folks running our government work for us. That means that we have a great deal of power – and a great deal of responsibility – to let them know what's important to us, and what we want them to do.

The power of your Activist Circle will come from three sources: organized people, organized resources, and organized ideas. The following handbook is going to help you get organized so you can influence the leaders around you to create real, lasting change in Darfur.

In this first section, Introduction to Advocacy, you're going to go through two big steps: assessing the kind of power and skills you as a group have, and figuring out who, both nationally and internationally, has the power to change what's happening in Darfur.

Step One: Assess Your Power

Before we even begin, you've got a lot more power than you probably think. What skills do you, as a group, already have? Is there anyone specific in your group who you would trust to take the lead on certain skills? Together with your Activist Circle, use the following inventory to assess your social power.

Skills	Who's got it?
Community Building Skills – the ability to bring people together and make them feel good	
Social Skills – the ability to work with many different people	
Verbal Skills – the ability to communicate or persuade others either individually or in a group	
Writing Skills – the ability to communicate a message through writing	
Leadership Skills – the ability to articulate a vision and mobilize others toward a common goal	
Analytical Skills – the ability to figure out what needs to be done and how to do it.	
Conflict Resolution Skills – the ability to help people resolve or understand differences	
Research and Information Gathering Skills – the ability to find and use information and facts	
Artistic or Cultural Skills – the ability to communicate through artistic expression	
Meeting Facilitation Skills – the ability to run a meeting smoothly and effectively	

Courage – the willingness to stand up for what you believe	
Persistence and Determination – the ability to work hard even when things are difficult	
Fearlessness – the willingness to take risks	
Precision – ability to work with numbers, count accurately and “know where things are at”	
Follow-Through with Details – the ability to do the little things	
Accountability – willingness to hold yourself and others responsible to the task	
Intellectual Curiosity – the desire to understand an issue as fully as possible	
Inspiration – the ability to help others believe in themselves and their capacity for change	

These skills are going to be important to look at when you choose which project you want to accomplish in the next trimester.

***Step Two:
The Powers-That-Be – Choose Your Target***

Advocates choose their targets carefully. Your target has to have an important role and influence over the issue that’s important to you. For the issue of bringing an end to the genocide in Darfur, this means three major players: The US, China, and the United Nations. Below is some detail about each, including what activists are asking each player to do and who, specifically, can be targeted. Don’t get overwhelmed – remember, you only need to choose ONE target, and you can focus your advocacy on ONE issue for the target you pick. So skim through and pick the issue/target you think is most interesting, most important, most relevant to your activist circle, and move forward from there.

1. The US

As far away as we may be from Sudan, the US has a whole lot of influence internationally. Remember, US influence in Sudan was essential in creating the 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement that ended the 20-year civil war between Khartoum and Southern Sudan. We’ve got power, we’ve got money, we’ve got serious influence at the United Nations – and that means we’ve got a whole lot of responsibility.

There are two major ways the US can help bring an end to the genocide in Darfur:

- **Support the Peace Process:** Bringing everyone involved in the conflict in Darfur to the negotiating table is a difficult but essential process. It’s going to take time, and most importantly, it’s going to take commitment. The US can support this process by appointing a full-time envoy to Sudan, backed by a team of diplomats working full-time in the region. Two deputies should focus on and closely coordinate between Darfur and Southern Sudan, respectively.
- **Push for UN Sanctions on Sudan:** Sudan has a history of thwarting international agreements – it also has a history of getting away with it. Though the US already has sanctions against Sudan in place, Sudan will keep doing what it wants to do until the world responds in a united fashion. Right now, for example, the Khartoum regime is obstructing the deployment of the United Nations/African Union peacekeeping force created to protect the people of Darfur. The United States should lead the U.N. Security Council in imposing targeted sanctions against senior Sudanese officials most responsible for obstructing the deployment of the force.

Specific Targets in the US:

- **President George W. Bush:** www.whitehouse.gov for contact info
- **Representatives of the House:** find representatives and contact info at www.house.gov
- **Senators:** find representatives and contact info at www.senate.gov
- **Candidates for 2008 Elections:** Check www.askthecandidates.org

2. China

China has a significant economic, military and political relationship with Sudan. This means that the Chinese government has more of a chance of influencing Sudan's leaders than practically any other country in the world. Why?

- **Economic Relationship:** China is Sudan's leading foreign investor and its largest oil exporter – an estimated 70% of Sudan's oil goes to China
- **Military Relationship:** China supplies arms to Khartoum, including guns, leg irons and heavy equipment such as helicopters and fighter aircraft.
- **Political Relationship:** China gives Khartoum significant protection at the UN Security Council, using its veto power to block sanctions and further action against Khartoum.

There's a lot China can do to help end the genocide in Darfur. Overall, activists are calling on China to use its leverage with Sudan to bring security to Darfur. Specifically, China could:

- Press publicly for Khartoum to keep its multiple commitments to disarm the Janjaweed militias that are responsible for so much civilian destruction;
- Press publicly for Khartoum to adhere to previous ceasefire commitments;
- Suspend all weapons transfers to Sudan;
- Suspend debt forgiveness to the Khartoum-dominated economy;
- Demand an end to aerial bombardment of civilian targets and obstruction of access to areas in Darfur by humanitarian aid workers;
- 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.

A quick note about the Olympics: The Olympic Games, scheduled for Beijing in 2008, traditionally invoke a spirit of brotherhood and humanity. As the Chinese government prepares its "One World, One Dream" themed campaign for the Games, the Darfur activist community has asked China to make good on this Olympic promise by pressuring the government of Sudan to end the genocide in Darfur. Because China really wants the Olympic Games to go well, they are very vulnerable to pressure around the Olympics.

Specific Targets in China:

- **President of China:** Hu Jintao
- **Chinese Ambassador to the US:** Zhou Wenzhong
- **Chinese Special Envoy on African Affairs:** Liu Guijin
- **Corporate Sponsors of the Olympics:** including Adidas, Anheuser-Busch, Atos Origin, BHPBilliton, Coca-Cola, Eastman Kodak, General Electric, Johnson & Johnson, Lenovo Group Limited, Manulife, McDonalds, Microsoft, Panasonic, Samsung, Staples, Swatch, UPS, Visa, Volkswagen

For the best way to contact any of the above targets, please check with Naama at Jewish World Watch (naama@jewishworldwatch.org or 818-501-1836).

3. The United Nations

We probably don't have to tell you how important the United Nations (UN) is in dealing with Sudan. The UN was created to be the watchdog of the world, an organization that would prevent and punish international crimes. Not only is the UN the keeper of international law, but influencing members of the UN is our way of telling other world leaders and world governments that the issue of Darfur is an international issue that cannot be ignored.

Specifically, the UN should:

- **Fully Equip and Immediately Deploy Peacekeepers:** In July, the UN Security Council passed a resolution (Resolution 1769) that authorized a 26,000-strong "hybrid" peacekeeping force to protect the people in Darfur. Sudan has been obstructing the deployment of that force constantly and consistently since, with the result that as of Jan 1, 2008, the UN authorized force has only about 9000 troops. The troops that are in Darfur, however, are not equipped as they should be. Specifically, the force is missing the 24 attack helicopters it requires, essential for protecting civilians, monitoring any cease-fire that is implemented, and protecting humanitarian aid workers.
- **Put Sanctions on Sudan:** Sudan has gotten away with its obstruction of Resolution 1769 so far, as it has gotten away with thwarting international law for decades. It's time the UN Security Council punished those people in the Khartoum government responsible for obstructing this resolution and all the other resolutions before it.

Specific Targets:

- **Secretary General of the UN:** Ban Ki-Moon
Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon
Executive Office of the Secretary-General
U.N. Headquarters # S-3800
New York, NY 10017
sg@un.org
- **President of the UN Security Council:** Rotates monthly, check current presidency at <http://www.un.org/sc/presidency.asp>
- **US Ambassador to the UN:** Dr. Zalmay Khalilzad
Ambassador Zalmay Khalilzad
Press and Public Diplomacy Section
United States Mission to the United Nations
140 East 45th Street
New York, N.Y. 10017
212-415-4050
USUNPublicAffairs@state.gov

Now that you've assessed your own power and the power of national and international actors to create change in Darfur, it's time to figure out how to tell them what you want them to do. In the next section you'll find three sample projects, all of which use different skills give your chosen target the same basic message: DO SOMETHING!

SAMPLE PROJECT #1
Letter Writing/Petition Campaign

One of the most effective ways we have in informing others and keeping focus on the issues we feel strongly about is by starting a letter-writing or petition campaign. Sending a letter or petition is a great way to register your support for your issue. Legislators keep track of each letter and e-mail that comes into their offices to see which issues are getting the most public interest. The more of their constituents who write in support of a certain issue, the more likely they are to support it themselves – so you can imagine the kind of impact you could have if you get, let's just say, 50 of your closest friends to write letters of their own or sign letters you've produced for them.

Skills inventory: You're going to hone a lot of different skills by doing this project. Think back to the skills inventory you did in this first section. To do this project, you'll want at least a basic grasp of:

- Research and information gathering skills,
- Writing skills
- Leadership skills

Don't worry if you don't feel expert in any of the above – working on this project will develop and reinforce the skills you already have!

In the following project, you've got two main options, both of which use the same above skills:

- **Letter-writing campaign:** In this option, you write a letter, photocopy it a bunch of times, and get people in your school, religious institution, and/or community to sign the individual letters. In a variation on the theme, you could create a document with simple talking points, and encourage them to create their own letters. The positive side of this option is that you wind up with a big stack of letters to send to your target – impressive looking! The downside is that you'll have to pay for more postage to send the big impressive package!
- **Petition campaign:** Basically the same project, but you write one letter and simply ask everyone you know to sign that same letter. You'll have a smaller stack of paper, but just as big an impact. With a petition, though, it's hard for people to edit or create their own letters – sometimes they won't sign just because they don't like one or two sentences, or because they don't have time to read the whole thing.

Step One – What to Say
Major skill: Research and Information Gathering

You've picked the target and issue that interests your group most. Now comes the hard part - you have to figure out what to say. How will you organize your letter so that your target can best understand what you want them to do?

Figuring that out means doing some real research. Luckily, you've got your Educate Yourself skills to fall back on. Here are some questions you'll want to answer as a group:

1. Who do we want to help?
2. Why do we want to help? (Knowing and being able to explain this will help you inform and convince others)
3. What outcome(s) do we want to see happen (this should be specific, like "multilateral sanctions on Sudan," as opposed to more general, like "peace in Darfur.")
4. Who is our target?
5. What do we want them to do?
6. Possible ways to inform and/or convince our target could include:

- a. Fact or statistic...
 - b. Fact or statistic...
 - c. Fact or statistic...
7. What questions do we still have?
 8. What information do we still need?

As you likely discovered in the last trimester, there are a LOT of places offering information that will help you answer these questions. Here's a quick list of resources that should definitely be first-stops in your research:

- Jewish World Watch: www.jewishworldwatch.org
- ENOUGH Project: www.enoughproject.org
- Save Darfur Coalition: www.savedarfur.org
- Genocide Intervention Network: www.genocideintervention.net
- Ask the Candidates: www.askthecandidates.org
- Dream for Darfur (specifically for China): www.dreamfordarfur.org

Step Two – Drafting Your Letter
Major skill: Writing

You've got a target, you've figured out what you want to tell that target to do, you've done some research to find some supporting facts and statistics that will help convince your target to take action. Now it's time to call on those writing skills and actually draft your letter.

Below are just a few quick pointers to keep in mind when writing your letter. We've also added some sample letters that may be good models.

- **Organize!** Organizing your letter before you write it is the most important thing you can do. You want to make sure you've got all your most important points in the letter in a way that's easy to understand.
- **Be clear and concise:** The letter you write should be short and to the point. The people you are targeting are busy folks – that doesn't mean that they get to ignore your letter, but that does mean that anything over a page won't get read.
- **Put your goal right up front:** The first paragraph of the letter should contain your purpose for writing the letter. If your letter pertains to a specific piece of law, make sure you identify it according to its bill or resolution number (for example, UN Security Council Resolution 1769/2007). This way, they know exactly what you're talking about.
- **Don't be afraid to ask for what you want:** Remember, the people that run the US government and the UN work for us. Even China is subject to international pressure and opinion. You have every right to ask the leaders of the world to do what you think is necessary – if you don't tell them, who will?
- **Be courteous and respectful!** Even if you think someone is doing a particularly terrible job, you must remain courteous and respectful in your tone at all times. World leaders respond to pressure, but they do not respond to bullying.
- **Thank your target:** It may seem odd to ask for action AND to thank your target, but this is a part of being respectful. You can thank your target for constructive action they have done in the past, or you can thank them simply for taking the time to read your letter.
- **Include at least one name and address:** Make sure to include contact information for at least one person in your Activist Circle so that you can receive any response. It's also a good idea to leave room for people who sign your letter to include their location or email

address – national and international leaders keep track of where pressure is coming from.

Step Three: Gathering Signatures
Major skill: Leadership

Gathering a lot of signatures for your letter, whether you do a petition or an individual letter-writing campaign, allows you to work collectively. Organized groups have more power than even the most powerful of individuals. Try to gather as many signatures as you can for your letters or petition. You'll have to think of the following things in order to make your campaign as effective as possible:

- **Who will sign our letter?** Do you want to target fellow students at your school? Folks at your religious institution? Random people on the street? Your school is probably a great first step, since school gives you a large group of people that would likely be sympathetic to your cause.
- **Where and when should we get them to sign?** Do you want to set up a table at lunch? Go from classroom to classroom? Put an announcement about the letter or petition in the bulletin for school, for your synagogue or church, or for a community organization? You'll want to make sure you are working in a high-traffic area. Make sure you organize a concrete time and location, and assign specific responsibilities to different people in your Activist Circle.
- **How will we draw attention to the letter?** Do you want to have signs or placards attracting people to a place to sign? Do you want to station people in different places in school or in public to gather people around and sign? Again, make sure you talk about this ahead of time, and assign specific tasks to your peers!
- **How should we approach people?** You'll want to come up with a short and courteous opening question with which to approach people. Something as simple as "Have you signed our petition to help Save Darfur?" works pretty well!
- **What materials will we need?** At the very least you'll need copies of your letter or petition and pens. You may also need a table, chairs, flyers or posters with information, or clipboards. Make sure you talk about and decide exactly what you will need BEFORE you go out to gather signatures!

Try to set yourselves a goal for how many signatures you'd like to gather. It's great to send a letter with 50, 100, or even more signatures attached to it. Remember, leaders count each letter they receive in the mail as if it represents 100 of their constituents!

Ready to send your letter? Make sure you include a brief cover letter that states the number of signatures you've gathered in support of your cause. Keep a copy of this letter for yourselves – it's important to keep track of how many signatures you've been able to rally together for the future. Email Naama at Jewish World Watch (naama@jewishworldwatch.org) and your Circle Leader to tell them how many signatures you've got!

One last tip: Don't get discouraged if you don't hear something right away! Fighting an issue as serious and complex as genocide is a long road. That means you may not see immediate results from your letter-writing campaign. Remember – our job as activists is to be a constant part of the headache, always there to remind our leaders that they have an important responsibility to act to end genocide!

Sample Letters

Below you will find a few different kinds of sample letters. Remember that you can always check Jewish World Watch's website (www.jewishworldwatch.org) or any of the national Save Darfur organizations to find advocacy letters and postcards that might also be good models. The below letters **DO NOT** represent the most current requests that need to be made, so make sure you don't copy these word-for-word. They are here as models only.

To Congress:

Dear Congressperson _____,

I am writing to urge you to support H.R. 3127: Darfur Peace and Accountability Act of 2006 which will be before the House of Representatives on March 29, 2006. The genocide in Darfur is the world's most alarming conflict and ending the conflict in Darfur should be at the top of the list of priorities for this country.

Imposing sanctions, supporting humanitarian projects in Darfur and the surrounding refugee camps and encouraging a peaceful end to the conflict is in the interests of United States security, and the security of the world. Since February 2003 up to 400,000 people have been killed and over 2.5 million displaced. Please act now, in the spirit of freedom and democracy, to help the victims of this genocide and put an end to their suffering now.

Thank you for your support and dedication,

To the Senate:

Dear Senator _____,

I am writing to urge you to support S. 3884: Darfur Peace and Accountability Act of 2006 which was read before the Senate on September 12, 2006. The genocide in Darfur is the world's most alarming conflict and ending the conflict in Darfur should be at the top of the list of priorities for this country.

Imposing sanctions, supporting humanitarian projects in Darfur and the surrounding refugee camps and encouraging a peaceful end to the conflict is in the interests of United States security, and the security of the world. Since February 2003 up to 400,000 people have been killed and over 2.5 million displaced. Please act now, in the spirit of freedom and democracy, to help the victims of this genocide and put an end to their suffering now.

Thank you for your support and dedication,

To the White House:

Dear President Bush,

You are said to have written, in response to a report about the 1994 genocide in Rwanda, "Not on my watch." I am writing you, Mr. President, to urge you to make truth of that statement. On your watch the world's most recent genocide erupted in Darfur, Sudan in February 2003. To date, up to 400,000 people have been killed and over 2.5 million have been displaced. In the spirit of freedom and democracy that has highlighted your presidential work, I ask you to make a real and committed effort to ending the conflict in Sudan.

The House and Senate have already passed bills (H.R. 3127 and S. 3884) supporting sanctions against Sudan and aiding relief efforts for victims and refugees. We call on you to make a clear and concerted effort at expanding our role in ending the conflict and easing the plight of its

victims.

Please make good on your promises to make this a priority and see this genocide halted and the conflict brought to an end. Let your legacy be, in these last weeks of your presidency, that you were the president who ended genocide in Sudan.

Thank you for your commitment,

To China:

Dear Ambassador Wenzhong:

China's leadership is key in the pursuit of a swift and sustainable peace in Sudan. With the Olympic Games upcoming in 2008, China can make the theme of "One World, One Dream" a reality. As an international economic leader, China is a nation with the ear of both the Sudanese government and the international community. As such, I believe China is in a unique position to bring a positive resolution to the crisis in Darfur.

I commend China's role in the passage of Resolution 1769, authorizing peacekeepers for Darfur. I urge you now to live up to the commitment you made to the people of Darfur by ensuring its full and immediate implementation. Only your government has the influence to prevent the constant pattern of obstruction exhibited by Khartoum in this regard. China must also suspend all arms and weapons sales to Sudan so long as the fighting in Darfur continues, and call for other nations to follow its example. Finally, I urge China to join others in the international community pressing for an immediate ceasefire and to lend its full support to the UN/AU peace process.

Sincerely,

To the Security Council:

Dear Ambassador Christian (President of the Security Council)

Thank you for your role, as Ambassador from Ghana, in the recent passage of UNSC Resolution 1769. This resolution is essential in bringing desperately needed protection to the people of Darfur.

As President of the Security Council for October 2007, I ask you now to lead the world in ensuring the full and immediate implementation of Resolution 1769. By October, and under your Presidency, UNAMID must:

- Establish its headquarters and the financial arrangements to cover troop costs for all personnel deployed to the African Union Mission in the Sudan (AMIS); and
- Assume operational command authority over the light support package, personnel currently deployed to AMIS and heavy support package and hybrid personnel.

I also ask you to maintain constant pressure on Khartoum to cooperate with the international community in ending the crisis in Darfur, including preparing sanctions against the nation should it delay deployment of the hybrid force or disrupt its work.

Sincerely,

SAMPLE PROJECT #2
Hold a Congressional Meeting

Holding a Congressional meeting, otherwise known as lobbying, is a tried and true way for citizens to communicate with their representatives. Decision-makers are in office because we put them there. With this in mind, it is only natural that you have every right and even obligation to set up a meeting with your legislators.

It may seem a little overwhelming to meet with your representative of Congress, but setting up a meeting is actually easier than you think. It'll take a few basic skills that your Activist Circle probably already has.

Skills inventory: You're going to hone a lot of different skills by doing this project. Think back to the skills inventory you did in this first section. To do this project, you'll want at least a basic grasp of:

- Follow-through with details
- Research and information gathering skills,
- Meeting Facilitation skills

Don't worry if you don't feel expert in any of the above – working on this project will develop and reinforce the skills you already have!

Step One: Setting up your Meeting
Major skills: Follow-through with details

Setting up a meeting with your Representative or Senator is as easy as making a phone call or sending a letter. The trick is in following up, checking in on your Representative's office to make sure the meeting gets scheduled.

To set up your meeting, follow these steps:

1. **Find your Representative or Senator:** Visit www.congress.org and type in your zip code to find your member of Congress. Get the email, phone number, and fax number for your Representative's local office.
2. **Decide when to have your meeting:** Unless you're planning on flying out to Washington DC, you're most likely hoping to meet with your Representative or Senator (or one of their Aides) in their home offices. That means waiting for a Congressional Recess – a time scheduled by Congress as a “break,” where Representatives and Senators are expected to return to their home offices and very often take meetings with their constituents. The next few Congressional Recesses in 2008 are:
 - a. Friday February 15 – Monday February 25: Congressional President's Day Recess
 - b. Friday March 14 – Friday March 21: Congressional Spring Recess
3. **Send a Meeting Request:** You'll want to send a specific kind of letter, called a “meeting request” addressed to the Scheduler in your Senator or Representative's office. The Scheduler is the person, not surprisingly, responsible for scheduling meetings for your legislator and his/her aides. Below is a sample meeting request:

[DATE]

The Honorable [First Name] [Last Name]

Attn: Scheduler

U.S. House of Representatives [or U.S Senate]

Street Address

City, State Zip

VIA FACSIMILE: [fax number]

Dear Representative (or Senator) [First Name] [Last Name]:

I am writing to request a meeting with you in your [name of city where district office is located] office during the [season] recess, which ends on [date]. I, along with other student leaders, would like to discuss upcoming legislation and opportunities aimed at stopping the genocide in Darfur. I am involved in [name of your group/organization], a local Darfur student activist group that works with Jewish World Watch.

Right now, we have an opportunity to make significant strides towards achieving our goals of peace and protection for the people of Darfur. We look forward to working with you on this issue. I will contact you shortly regarding the possibility of scheduling this meeting. In the meantime, you can contact me at [insert phone number] or [insert email] if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

[Your Name]

[Name of Group]

4. **Follow Up:** Make sure to place a follow-up call to the Scheduler in your Senator or Representative's office. Use the below script:

"Hi, my name is _____ and I am calling on behalf of [name of your group]. I would like to speak with the legislative aide who focuses on Africa. [Wait to be transferred]

Hi, my name is _____ and I am calling on behalf of [name of your group], which is a local Darfur student activist group that works with Jewish World Watch.

I am following up on my earlier [fax or letter] sent on [date] requesting a district meeting with Representative/Senator _____ during the [season] recess to talk about the situation in Darfur and upcoming opportunities aimed at stopping the genocide. There would be about [x#] of us attending this meeting.

Did your office receive the meeting request that we sent?

Great! It's important that we meet with Representative [insert name here] during the recess because we have an opportunity right now to make significant strides towards achieving peace and protection for the people of Darfur. When would be the best time for Representative [insert name here] be able to meet?

Great! [Set the meeting time]

Thank you for your time and I look forward to meeting with you and Representative/Senator _____ on [date/time of meeting]."

- **TIP: Be flexible!** The more flexible your schedule is, the more likely your representative will be able to meet.
- **TIP: Be persistent (politely)!** It is important that our elected leaders hear our voices NOW, at this critical time of action for Darfur. Tell the congressional offices how many supporters your Save Darfur group has (Jewish World Watch has over 300,000, so you can use that number), and that you represent many other constituents in your request for a meeting.
- **TIP: Ask for the aide's email address.** If you have to leave a message, say your name and the group you are with, and leave a number you can be reached at. Make sure to say that you have already sent in a letter requesting a meeting. Also mention that you will follow-up with another call by the end of the day or the next morning.

Step Two: Preparing for your Meeting
Major Skills: Research and information gathering

Now that you've set up a meeting with a Representative or Senator, you need to prepare for it. Preparation is key – if you go into your meeting knowledgeable, assertive and respectful, your Representative will feel that pressure is coming from a well-informed community – a community that can't be ignored!

Here are a few things you'll need to do to prepare for your meeting:

1. **Organize your delegation:** You'll of course want members of your Activist Circle who are available on the day of the meeting to attend. You'll also want to work together to recruit other community members, such as teachers or religious leaders. You might also want to invite someone from Jewish World Watch to join you. Including other people makes your group more strategic – it shows that you represent the community at large, and that the whole community is demanding action to stop the genocide. Aim for 3-6 participants in your meeting.
2. **Develop an agenda:** Keep in mind the various topics you'll need to discuss in your meeting. Remember, you're the ones that asked for the meeting, which means you're going to set the agenda. Some topics you'll probably want to cover would be:
 - a. An introduction to your group
 - b. An overview of local Darfur activism and recent events
 - c. Each action you'd like your representative to take (otherwise known as a "policy ask")
3. **Do Your Homework:** You don't need to be an expert, but it is important to have a good understanding of the issue and politician. Check to see if your member of Congress has taken any other action on Darfur. If he or she has, begin the meeting by thanking them for their good work. Go to www.darfurscores.org for information about your member's record on Darfur issues.
4. **Assign Tasks to Participants:** You'll want to assign each participant in your meeting a specific agenda item to discuss so that the meeting flows easily. This will help to keep the meeting focused and on time. Below is a suggestion on how you could break up the roles (ultimately these roles should be driven by your agenda). Roles include:
 - a. **Facilitator** – This is the person that will run the meeting, keep it on time, and often closes the meeting with the follow up plan.
 - b. **Policy Introduction** – Educate yourself and be prepared to talk about upcoming Darfur legislation. This person could also be responsible for communicating the asks, but it's also fine to have it be another person. If you have more than one

- policy ask, you may want to assign each to a different person.
- c. **Note Taker** - Someone should take notes and listen to responses so follow up questions can be tailored appropriately.
 - d. **Follow Up** - While it may not be a big focus of the meeting, someone should be designated as the “point of contact” or follow up person after the meeting.
5. **Prepare Materials:** Gather some materials to give to your representative or senator at the beginning of your meeting. Your materials packets could include:
 - a. Any written information you have about your group, including a list of groups that are coalition members.
 - b. Contact information for you or your group.
 - c. Information about the legislative or policy asks you are making.
 6. **Pre-Meeting Training:** Sometime before your visit, bring together your group (if more than one person will be meeting with the representative/senator) for a simple, informal preparation and training session. This will give everyone a chance to prepare their materials ahead of time and run through them with the group.

Step Three: Running your Meeting
Major skills: Meeting facilitation

If you've prepared well and have delegated tasks, running your Congressional meeting will be the easiest part of this project! It will be important for you to approach this meeting with a calm head and with the respect deserving of a public official. Here are some tips how to make your meeting more successful, and a few things to avoid:

DO:

- **Prioritize:** The lobby meeting should take between 30 – 60 minutes, but it could take as little as 5 – 10 minutes. If you only have a short meeting, be prepared to prioritize. The most important topics to get to in the conversation are your asks.
- **Address the representative, official or diplomat appropriately—**Remember, these are elected officials or international dignitaries and they should be addressed with due respect. No matter how you might feel about their policies or voting patterns, it is very important to give them the respect they deserve.
- **Refer specifically to any legislation by number and make sure to be well versed in the status of that legislation—**Congresspersons and Senators deal with a large volume of legislation on a wide array of topics; they certainly know to what you are referring, but it is best to be as specific as you can.
- **Be brief, concise, direct and use your own words**
- **Bring literature to leave with them—**these officials are very busy and your time with them is limited. Leave them with literature which highlights important facts and arguments which they can read on their own time.
- **Be positive, polite and contained—**this issue can be very emotional for many people but it is important to understand that it might not be the most important issue to that representative. Being reactionary will get you nowhere, stay calm and collected.
- **Present a small number of clear, concrete requests—**make sure you let the person know what you would like to see them do in specifics
- **PRACTICE!** Give your spiel to friends and family as many times as they'll listen to you

DON'T

- Make statements like “as a citizen;” they already know you are one.
- Apologize for taking their time—it’s their job! But be sure to be brief.
- Be arrogant or condescending, and you should certainly never be threatening.
- Argue if the person you are lobbying does not agree with your position. Try to be persuasive but keep a positive rapport to allow for future visits to be a possibility.

Overall Calendar:

There is a lot of stuff to plan and prepare for your lobby visit. Here is a general timeline that is good to follow to ensure that you are on top of your game.

- **4 weeks before:** Schedule your visit. Start by going to www.congress.org and finding out who your representative is by entering your zip-code.
- **3 weeks before:** Arrange your delegation. It might be a good idea to ask a teacher or rabbi to join your delegation; community leaders are listened to!
- **2 weeks before:** Draft a petition and have community members, friends and family sign it. Collect and compile the literature you plan to leave with the office (remember, Jewish World Watch can help you put materials together). Schedule a delegation training meeting with all of your representatives for next week.
- **1 week before:** Practice, practice, practice! Practice as individuals with friends and family. When your full delegation meets as one group, run a mock lobby meeting; find someone from the group or outside the group to act as the elected official.
- **2 or 3 days before:** Confirm your meeting by phone.
- **Day of:** After the meeting arrange for a single contact with whom to direct all future correspondence.
- **Follow-up:** In the days following your meeting set up a phone meeting for a future date with your contact person to discuss the progress of the requests you had made. Once you leave the office which you had your lobbying meeting at, your job is not yet complete! Send a cordial follow-up letter to thank to official for meeting with you. Around a week or two after your letter has likely been received, make a phone call to the official’s office to see what progress has been made on your requests. It is essential to view your lobbying as the beginning of a new relationship.

SAMPLE PROJECT #3
Organizing a Rally or Protest

In the US, we're lucky enough to have the right to free assembly - when groups of individuals feel strongly about an issue, they have the right to express those views publicly. A great way to express your opinion on an issue is through a rally or public protest. A rally works well because it is so visible – whether you're at school or in another public space, getting a big group of people together around one issue can really draw a lot of attention.

Skills inventory: You're going to hone a lot of different skills by doing this project. Think back to the skills inventory you did in this first section. To do this project, you'll want at least a basic grasp of:

- Follow-through with details
- Community building skills
- Inspiration

Don't worry if you don't feel expert in any of the above – working on this project will develop and reinforce the skills you already have!

Step One: Organize Yourself
Major Skill: Follow-through with details

Putting together your rally means staying organized. A rally doesn't have to be a complicated event, but it can easily get messy if you don't make a few key decisions ahead of time. Here are some things you'll want to think about:

1. **Target:** Choose your target wisely, as always (see the Introduction to Advocacy section of this handbook, above). A clear understanding of who your target is – whether the US government, China, or the UN – will determine your decisions for pretty much everything else, including message and location of your rally.
2. **Purpose of Rally:** The purpose of many rallies is to inform others about the cause you are rallying for. Sometimes rallies, especially street protests and picket lines, are intended to pressure powers into seeing the importance of the message. Is your goal to inform the public or to pressure leaders to make specific changes? Both are valid and both are important.
3. **Message:** As always, your message is an incredibly important thing to think about. It is important for everyone at your rally (and passers-by) to have a clear understanding of the message that has brought people together. Your message should be clear and concise, but still precise enough that people can understand why you've gathered together.
4. **Location:** Don't underestimate how crucial this decision is! You'll want to be in a place where a lot of people can hear your message. Understanding your target, your purpose and your message will help you make this decision. A pep rally at school, for example, is a great way to get a small group of people informed, involved and excited. A rally or vigil in a public place is a great way to raise awareness amongst a large number of people. If your target is China, for example, you might want to consider holding your rally outside the Chinese Consulate (the one in Los Angeles is located at 443 Shatto Place, Los Angeles). If your target is someone in the US government or the UN, you might consider holding your rally in a generally public place, where lots of people can see your message (unless you're willing to travel to New York or Washington DC!).
5. **Permits:** Depending on your location, you may need to get permits for your rally. If you need permits, get them early—to get a permit you need to contact your local police department. Usually if you have a smaller group on a sidewalk, or in a private space like a school, you won't need permits. Permits might be necessary, however, for large groups to congregate in

public spaces like street corners or parks. Contact your local authority to find out—better safe than sorry.

6. **Communication:** You'll want to think ahead of time how best to communicate your message to the public or to your target. A few options to consider are:
 - a. **Signs/Posters:** Signs and banners are a great way to get your message across. When large groups of people hold the same sign with the same message it can have a powerful effect on people who see it. Messages on signs should be short and concise, and make the message loud and clear, like, "Save Darfur" or "Stop Genocide in Darfur".
 - b. **Chants:** It may sound hokey, but coming up with some chants that everyone can yell together can be very effective. Chants also tend to get people excited, and help your participants keep a loud, unified voice.
 - c. **Speeches:** Short-and-sweet speeches, particularly from someone well-recognized and well-respected, can really draw a crowd and garner attention for your rally. Choose speakers wisely – you'll want them to know something about the issue and be able to speak clearly and effectively.

Step Two: Organize your Community
Major skills: Community building

Numbers make a big difference. The more people at a rally, the more attention you'll get, the more people you have a chance to influence. When someone attends a rally that has high energy and excitement they leave excited and inspired to continue to do work on the issue on their own and are more likely to inspire others to do similar work. This is how grassroots activism works!

Here are a few things to consider to help you get as many people as possible to attend your rally.

1. **Where can we advertise?** Think of the communities you have access to easily. You and members of your group can probably get the word out at school, at religious institutions, at public libraries, at other community organizations, and even at some businesses (there's no reason parents can't help).
2. **How can we advertise?** There are several ways that you can get the word out to each individual community. Consider the following:
 - a. **Word of Mouth:** Talking to people is a great way to raise support and awareness for your rally. If each person in your group can find 5 friends to commit, that's already a big group attending; imagine if those 5 friends each find another 5 friends!
 - b. **Flyers/Posters:** Designing and posting a flyer or poster about your rally is another effective way to get the word out. Your flyer or poster should be clear and concise, include your message, and include all relevant information about time and location.
 - c. **Bulletins/Announcements:** Take advantage of existing methods for getting the word out. Does your school have announcements during homeroom? Does your synagogue or church have a bulletin? Do any of your community organizations or youth groups have a monthly newsletter? Does your apartment building or community have a bulletin board? Make sure to get the information about your rally included in these resources as well.
3. **Are there any groups we can coordinate with?** Activism is all about networking! Like-minded organizations can provide support, resources and people for your rallies.

Jewish World Watch can help connect you to other organizations in your area that might be interested in helping you out.

- 4. Can we get press coverage?** You might consider trying to generate some press coverage for your event. If you have a large group of people coming together for an issue, you will want people to know about it. Your local newspaper, TV station, and on local radio stations often have community service announcements. You'll want to consider sending a Media Advisory – a brief description of your event - to local TV stations, radio stations, and newspapers – and don't forget your school newspaper! A sample Media Advisory is below:

FOR PLANNING PURPOSES

Contact: [Insert contact info for your group here]

MEDIA ADVISORY

DAY of your event: TITLE (for example, Local student advocates rally for peace in Darfur)

CITY – DESCRIPTION OF YOUR EVENT (Example: Local Darfur student activists will on [DAY] hold a rally in [CITY] to raise awareness of the ongoing genocide in Darfur. Activists, joined by [LIST ANY NOTED PARTICIPANTS HERE], aim to pressure China – as Sudan's chief diplomatic sponsor, major weapons provider, and largest foreign investor and trade partner; and as host of the 2008 Summer Olympics – to use its unique position to lead the world in bringing an end to the ongoing violence and humanitarian crisis in Darfur.

WHO: [NOTED PARTICIPANT, TITLE]
[NOTED PARTICIPANT, TITLE]
[...]

WHEN: [DAY], [DATE], [TIME]

WHERE: [NAME OF LOCATION]
[ADDRESS]

About [Your Group] – Description of Your Group here (Example, from Save Darfur: The Save Darfur Coalition raises public awareness about the ongoing genocide in Darfur and mobilizes a unified response to the atrocities that threaten the lives of people throughout the Darfur region. It is an alliance of more than 180 faith-based, advocacy and humanitarian organizations. The coalition's member organizations represent 130 million people of all ages, races, religions and political affiliations united together to help the people of Darfur. For more information on the coalition, please visit www.SaveDarfur.org. To obtain footage from the Darfur border region, coalition events, various interviews, and more, please visit the Save Darfur Coalition media gallery at <http://media.savedarfur.org>. All footage may be previewed in non-broadcast quality and may be purchased in broadcast quality by filling out the purchase request form provided on the site.)

Step Three: Holding Your Rally ***Major Skills: Inspiration***

You're organized, you're advertised, and you're ready to hold your rally! This is the great part – where all your work serves to inspire your community to action. Here are a few things you'll want to get together in the days before your rally:

- 1. Program:** Make sure you know what's going to happen at your rally at any one moment. Are you guys going to spend the whole time on a street corner, getting attention from

cars? Are you going to have any speakers? Make a timeline or an agenda for your rally and give copies to all of the organizers – you'll need to know what should happen when.

2. **Materials:** What are you going to need on the day of the rally? Make a check-list of materials and make sure someone is responsible for bringing every item. Some things you might need on the day of the rally are: press advisories, leaflets or flyers to hand out, signs and posters, a microphone or megaphone, a podium, etc. If you're having speakers, you may want to have somewhere for them to sit while they're waiting to speak. If you're planning on having a petition at your rally (see Sample Project #1, above), you will also need copies of your petition, pens for people to sign with, and possibly clip boards.
3. **Delegates:** You'll want to delegate specific tasks to specific people in your Activist Circle. Someone should be responsible for:
 - a. **Day-of coordination:** This person should be the person primarily responsible for making sure the program for the day is adhered to. They'll cue speakers, make sure everyone's on time, and so forth.
 - b. **Crowd control:** This person is responsible for making sure everyone adheres to any rules in your location. They should be firm, but respectful and polite.
 - c. **Materials:** This person is primarily responsible for making sure that needed materials arrive at the rally on time. That doesn't mean that this person has to create all the materials, but they are in charge and are responsible.
 - d. **Press:** If you're expecting any press to come out, you'll want to designate one person as a spokesperson to greet the press and answer any questions about the event. It's good to have someone like this prepared just in case!
 - e. **Chant leader:** Chants are a great way to get energy up at your rally, but if you don't write the chants ahead of time and designate a person to lead them, we guarantee SOMEONE at your rally will do it for you – and you never know what they'll say!
 - f. **Leaflet/flyer person:** If you're planning on having any information to hand out to passers-by (flyers, brochures, leaflets and etc), you'll want to designate specific people to be responsible for handing out materials.

Remember, a big part of your job at this rally is to inspire your community and your leaders to take action. They can only have as much energy as you do, so go for it! Good luck at your rally!