Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

April 13, 2006

The Honorable Condoleezza Rice
Secretary of State
2201 C St NW Ste 7276
Washington DC 20520

Dear Secretary Rice:

We write to express our strong support for the appointment of a special envoy for Sudan.

While we commend the effort that has been put into trying to secure peace in Sudan, the situation continues to worsen. Innocent civilians continue to suffer in Darfur, with an estimated two million people in displaced camps, 200,000 refugees in Chad, and an estimated 300,000 people killed. The crisis in eastern Sudan remains unresolved.

The Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) between the government and the SPLM faces serious challenges, with key provisions of the agreement not being fully implemented by the government. A special envoy, with full mandate and access to senior officials, is critical to maintaining pressure on the government of Sudan for full implementation of the CPA and better coordination of U.S. policy. While we all had great hopes for peace in the South, current indications show that Khartoum is only selectively complying with its obligations and deliberately slow-rolling implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement.

We are concerned that there is no one single point person whose sole responsibility is to monitor the situation in Darfur and the South and answer directly to you and the president. Whoever is appointed could work directly with Roger Winter, the State Department's special representative for Sudan. For decades Roger has helped the helpless in the South, Nuba, eastern Sudan, and other parts of Sudan. The average person as well as top officials in these areas, continue to have enormous respect for Roger Winter.

The administration's active engagement was instrumental in bringing an end to the horrific civil war that took the lives of over two million people in southern Sudan. A bold effort is needed to try to bring about peace and security to the millions of people at risk in Darfur and to help hold the fragile CPA agreement together.

It is not too late for Sudan, but time is of the essence. There are clear steps that can be taken. The appointment of a special envoy with a clear mandate and authority, who has the ear of the president and the secretary of State, is past due.

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One choice for this appointment might be Ambassador Tony Hall, former member of Congress from Ohio. He is a passionate defender of human rights and knows the issues that Sudan is facing. As the current ambassador to the United Nations Food and Agricultural Organization in Rome, Mr. Hall has worked to alleviate hunger and poverty across the globe. He is respected by members of both parties and is someone in whom you could have complete confidence. He is well suited for this position and would serve you well.

The appointment of a special envoy will send a clear message to Khartoum that the president continues to place a priority on Darfur and that he will not let the CPA fail. While no one can guarantee that this approach will work, we owe it to the women and children clinging to life in refugee camps to try everything.

We ask that you appoint an envoy as quickly as possible.

Sincerely,

Jim McGovern

Nancy Pelosi

Chris Smith

[redacted]

Dave Hobson

Charles B. Rangel

Alcee L. Hastings

Tom Davis

Mark Udall

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