



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Malcolm Smith

## Stop Sponsoring Genocide

MALCOLM A. SMITH May 22, 2007

The New York State Senate today passed legislation (S.5287A), co-sponsored by Senator Sampson (D-19) calling on New York companies and government to pull their money from Sudan, in an effort to stop Sudanese government sponsored militia from continuing the ongoing genocide in Darfur.

"Our State has a moral obligation to support socially constructive investment and to divest from bloody enterprises", said Senator Sampson. "Republicans, Democrats, and Conservatives are all coming to an agreement on Darfur: let's get our government money out of the criminal's hands and let's persuade the private sector to do the same," he continued. "Those who are still engaged in economic activities with the terrorist government must stop financing the killing and inhumane displacement of the civilian population."

Senator Sampson called the Darfur situation 'abominable'. "As an issue critical to all Americans, New York State financial contribution to this human tragedy can be addressed through cooperative efforts and should be done with expediency to save those lives that hang in the balance"

Sampson's legislation authorizes the State Comptroller to use his discretion in divesting funds from Sudan. The bill was co-sponsored by Republican State Senator Joseph E. Robach

(R-56) and passed with bipartisan support. In the Assembly, the bill was introduced by Assemblyman Darryl C. Towns (D-54) and James F. Brennan (D-44).

Since 2003, the ongoing massacre in Darfur has resulted in the deaths of more than 200,000 people and left more than 2 million displaced, in a tragedy condemned all over the world. Thousands of lives have been destroyed by systematic rape, wholesale destruction of vital basic resources and deplorable conditions in refugee camps.

Currently, 11 states have passed legislation to divest government investment from Sudan and several others are evaluating legislation to do the same. At the national level, both republican and democrat elected officials continue efforts for additional federal and United Nations action. On April 18, President Bush promised that the United States would impose sanctions on Sudan, unless its government stops the killings in Darfur. "President Bush needs to stick to his guns and take the leadership in a global effort to stop the bloodshed in Darfur. Indifference is not an option, Mr. President," said Senate Democratic Malcolm A. Smith Smith.

Smith stressed the need for the United States to continue pressuring Sudan's President Omar Hassan al-Bashir to allow complete deployment of the United Nations peacekeeping forces or immediately impose economic sanctions on the terrorist government. Studies have shown that 70% of the oil-related revenues in Sudan goes to military spending, enabling the government to finance militia atrocities. Economic pressure to halt these revenue sources is an effective strategy.

A recent survey conducted by KRC Research, found that 84 percent of the American public would withdraw their investments from American companies that do business with companies that directly or indirectly support genocide. Divestment was a critical strategy in

the successful struggle against apartheid in South Africa, and should be used to bring to halt the devastating loss of life in Darfur.

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