

Statement of

The Honorable Tom Coburn

United States Senator

Oklahoma

June 24, 2008

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Hearing: "From Nuremberg to Darfur: Accountability for Crimes Against Humanity"" Subcommittee on Human Rights and the Law

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I would like to thank Chairman Durbin for scheduling today's hearing, the focus of which will largely be on Darfur. The Chairman and I share an interest in the region and the unspeakable atrocities that have been committed there these past few years. I am pleased to see the Subcommittee focus on Darfur today, as we discuss the larger issue of crimes against humanity.

While crimes against humanity have been committed all around the world, there is, tragically, perhaps no better current example of such offenses than in the Sudan region of Darfur. From murder to torture to rape to enslavement and other heinous acts, crimes against humanity have run rampant throughout this conflict. As many as 400,000 people have been killed and more than two million have been displaced from their homes. The gravity and magnitude of this human calamity are unimaginable.

The United States has been concerned about Darfur for some time. President Bush has made Sudan one of his highest foreign policy priorities. I commend him for the progress that has been made during his watch, which includes providing more than \$4 billion in humanitarian, peacekeeping, and development assistance to the people of Sudan and Eastern Chad since 2005, making the United States the largest single donor to the region. Other examples of U.S. efforts in Sudan, as documented by the State Department, include: funding 25% of the UN-AU peacekeeping operation and UN monitoring mission; constructing and maintaining 34 base camps for peacekeepers; committing more than \$100 million to train and equip African battalions; and serving as the largest food donor to the Sudan by providing 40 tons of food aid every month.

Yet despite the incredible support of the United States and other nations around the world, the crisis in Darfur continues and its status today is unacceptable. This hearing will bring renewed awareness to the crimes against humanity that continue, and will lead to productive discussions about what can and should be done from here.

I welcome all of our witnesses and wish to extend sincere appreciation to each of you for taking the time and effort to be here today. Your expertise is vital to a complete understanding of this issue. I look forward to hearing the unique perspective of each witness on this diverse panel.

Mr. Hari, I especially look forward to your testimony. There is no substitute for hearing from someone who has lived in Darfur and who has experienced the heartbreaking transition from a peaceful, happy homeland to a war-torn crime scene. I commend you for your incredible courage and urge you to continue speaking out about what is happening back home. Truth is a powerful tool in the battle of good and evil.

I will keep my statement short, as I am anxious to hear from our panel. Thank you all for being here today.