

UN Human Rights Council

4th Session, Geneva, 12th – 30 March 2007)

Report of the High Level Mission on Darfur

Oral Intervention by Dr. Charles Graves on behalf of Interfaith International

Mr. President, Distinguished Members of the Human Rights Council,

Interfaith International wishes to thank members of the High Level Mission on Darfur for their excellent efforts in documenting the tragic situation in that region of the world. Their report before this session of the Council is yet another warning signal to the world community about the tragic situation endured by the unfortunate victims of the the armed conflict in Darfur who are left without protection from the international community. Interfaith International condemns the attitude of the government of Sudan and its unwillingness to cooperate with the HLM. This is yet one more occasion where the government of Sudan has shown unacceptable intransigence and disregard vis à vis the decisions of institutions in which it is a state member.

The conflict in that region of Sudan has caused immense suffering and misery. The report of the HLM on Darfur is important in the sense that it sheds more light on the profound credibility gap between Sudan's statements about the crisis in Darfur and the reality on the ground. It has established the clear link between the government military policy in Darfur and the massive destruction of lives and livelihoods that occur in the region. No tribal conflict in Sudan was capable of displacing more than two million persons from their land or forcing more than three hundred thousands to flee the region into neighbouring countries. No tribe in Sudan has Antonov war planes that drop shrapnell-loded barrel-bombs and destroy whole civilain areas.

Mr. President,

In short two criminal realities underly the the human tragedy in the Darfur region.

1. The premeditated mass killing and physical destruction - in whole or in part - of the indigenous tribes of the Darfur region because of their ethnic and/or tribal backgrounds; and
2. The appropriation of their land, the confiscation of their livestock and other material wealth and in some cases the extortion of money for 'protection' by the Janjaweed militia groups with the full knowledge and presence of government authorities.

Finally, from the HLM report we have come to the conclusion that all the ingredients for a humanitarian disaster of a large scale are in place in the Darfur region at this point of time. If no concrete action is taken now then we should prepare ourselves for large-scale tragedy where thousands of persons (especially women and children) will perish or will be in the verge of perishing because of lack of food, medicine, shelter or protection from the indiscriminate attacks.

Thank you for your kind attention.