

Media Release

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darfur australia network



Protests around the world mark grim four-year anniversary of Darfur conflict: Calls grow for imposition of targeted sanctions on Sudanese regime

Protests will take place on Sunday 29th April in over 35 capitals around the world to mark the fourth anniversary of the deadly conflict in Darfur.

Around the world 10,000 hourglasses filled with fake blood will be turned by activists to mark the start of the conflict four years ago.

“Four years after the start of the conflict the blood of more than two hundred thousand murdered Darfuri’s stains the deserts of Darfur. The lives of the local population lie in tatters, as does the reputation of the international community,” said Ismail Jarbo, a survivor from Darfur who will be taking part in the events.

In Melbourne, the film “Noise for Darfur” will be screened at Federation Square at 3:30 pm and 6:30 pm on Sunday the 29th of April to commemorate Global Day for Darfur. The Darfur community will be present at the 3:30 screening and will be available for interviews.

A public lecture will also be held on Tuesday 1st May to commemorate the day. Four eminent speakers will discuss and debate what Australia and the International community should do to restore the peace in Darfur. Speakers include Mr Michael Danby MP, Ms Pamela Bone, Dr Alex Bellamy and Mr Abdelhadi Matar. The debate will be mediated by Richard Simpson, Oxfam Australia. The forum will take place between 6.30 and 8.00pm, at Melbourne University Law School, 185 Pelham St, Carlton.

Stephanie Cousins, Director of Darfur Australia Network, said “Just because there are vast oceans between us doesn’t mean we have an excuse to ignore genocide in Darfur. The Australian Government needs to know the world’s eyes are on Darfur, and how they act to alleviate this crisis will be a testament to their commitment to universal human rights”

Globe for Darfur, a global network of dozens of different organisations is calling for the imposition of targeted sanctions to force all sides to respect the ceasefire, end attacks on civilians, allow the deployment of an effective international peacekeeping force, and stop attacks on aid operations in the region.

In particular the group is calling on the U.N. to impose asset freezes and travel bans on individuals continuing the violence and to enlarge the arms embargo.

“The government of Sudan has played the international community for fools and our politicians have fallen into every trap they’ve set. Despite more than two hundred thousand deaths, two million made homeless and two new countries becoming embroiled in the war, the international community continues to delay decisive action. Today we’re saying time is up, the people of Darfur need protection now,” said Larry Rossin, a spokesperson for the Globe for Darfur.

The situation in Darfur continues to deteriorate with over 400,000 newly displaced people in the last year, including over 86,000 already in 2007. Four million people are now affected by the crisis, which has spread from Sudan into Chad and the Central African Republic, and almost a quarter of these cannot get assistance because of insecurity.

Events are scheduled in the following locations and more are expected to join before Sunday:

Austria, Australia, Bahrain, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Egypt, France, Gambia, Germany, Ghana, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Luxembourg, Mali, Mauritius, Mongolia, Netherlands, Nigeria, Norway, Poland, Senegal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Tanzania, Thailand, Tunisia, UK, Ukraine, USA.

In the last four years the conflict has:

- Spread to two other countries (Chad and the Central African Republic);
- Led to 16 un-enforced UN resolutions;
- Provoked 60 statements of concern from the EU but zero action;
- Killed well over 200,000 people;
- Forced 230,000 people to flee the country;
- Cut off an estimated 900,000 from aid;
- Made two million people homeless; and
- Made four million people dependant on limited and erratic humanitarian assistance (2/3 of the population)

NOTES:

1. An audio email with a harrowing story of a child in Darfur has been launched on the Globe for Darfur website, calling on UN Secretary General to do more to protect the people of Darfur. You can download the audio from: www.globefordarfur.org/act_now.html
2. Previous Global Day for Darfur events attracted tens of thousands of supporters from around the world. In September 2006, events focused on the need to deploy U.N. peacekeeping troops into Darfur. The second Global Day in December highlighted the use of sexual violence against the women of Darfur. For more information about the events on April 29, please visit www.globefordarfur.org.
3. Video and pictures will be available ahead of the day.

For more information on the day please contact:

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