



Department of Social Development and World Peace

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May 11, 2006

The Honorable Condoleezza Rice
U.S. Department of State
2201 C St. NW
Washington, DC 20520

Dear Secretary Rice:

I write to express appreciation for the leadership of the Administration in working to secure an end to the terrible tragedy that is Darfur.

The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops supported the "Save Darfur Rally" on April 30 and its call for robust U.S. leadership to end the terrible suffering of the people of Darfur. The conference was encouraged when President Bush met with rally organizers the Friday before the rally, but it was even more significant when Deputy Secretary of State Zoellick was sent to Abuja. From the news accounts, the negotiations were difficult, but U.S. leadership made a decisive difference. Your own trip to the United Nations Security Council was one more sign of the extent of the U.S. commitment to Darfur.

We asked for concerted U.S. leadership on Darfur and in the last few weeks the President and the Administration have provided it. Our bishops' Conference knows that the road towards peace for the people of Darfur is long and uncertain and that this agreement could easily unravel without sustained U.S. and international attention. The Administration's action to help forge this agreement was critical, however, and we are grateful for these efforts and others you have taken on behalf of the long-suffering people of Darfur.

We ask for continued U.S. resolve in the weeks and months ahead. The experience of the past few days has revealed that progress can be made with high level U.S. engagement. Please share the gratitude of our Conference with all in the Administration who made these initial steps toward peace possible. We offer our support for continued and sustained leadership in the difficult days ahead.

Sincerely yours,

Bishop Thomas G. Wenski
Bishop of Orlando
Chairman, Committee on International Policy