

[Download this sample letter to the editor and use it as a guide to write a letter to your local paper expressing your concern about the Darfur crisis and the need for US action. The likelihood of your letter being published will increase if you can refer to a news story about issues surrounding the Darfur crisis.]

To the Editor:

The current ongoing crisis in Darfur, Western Sudan, has led to the displacement of over 1.4 million people. Thus far, the United Nations has described it as the world's worst humanitarian crisis. There have been reports of numerous attacks by government-backed militia, known as the Janjawid, resulting in the loss of over 50,000 civilian lives. The Janjawid are also responsible for the pillaging and looting of homes, as well as the rape of thousands of women. Due to the rainy season, roads are becoming increasingly impassable for humanitarian operations. The displaced also face ill-treatment, hunger, disease, humiliation and the high prospect that many more will succumb to death unless there is an unprecedented humanitarian initiative.

Addressing these immediate humanitarian issues must be done concurrently with establishing an independent Commission of Inquiry into the situation on Darfur. This Commission would conduct a thorough investigation of the crisis and help guide the appropriate follow up response by the international community once the immediate crisis has been addressed. Establishing accountability for the abuses in Darfur will be critical if we hope to avoid repeating the crisis – be it in Sudan or elsewhere.

[your name here]

Amnesty International Group

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