

Resolution Title: Resolution to Stop War Crimes and Ethnic Cleansing In Darfur
Submitted by: Professional Staff Congress/CUNY

WHEREAS, in the words of the historian Douglas Johnson, “The Sudan entered the twenty-first century mired in not one, but many civil wars . . . Fighting has spread into theatres outside the southern Sudan, and beyond the Sudan’s borders. Not only are Muslims fighting Muslims, but ‘Africans’ are fighting ‘Africans.’ A war once described as being fought over scarce resources is now being waged for the total control of abundant oil reserves . . . the overall civil war which is composed of these interlocking struggles has continued for so long, far outlasting the international and regional political configurations which at one time seemed to direct and control it” (*The Root Causes of Sudan’s Civil Wars*, Indiana 2004, xi); and

WHEREAS, news reports and detailed investigations by Amnesty International (*Empty Promises*, July 16, 2003), and Human Rights Watch (*Darfur in Flames*, April 2, 2004) have confirmed large-scale human rights abuses, war crimes, and ethnic cleansing against civilians in the Darfur region of western Sudan, carried out by government troops and government-supported militias (the Janjaweed), in the context of a counter-insurgency campaign against two armed rebel groups; and

WHEREAS, these crimes have resulted in tens of thousands of civilian deaths and the displacement of more than a million and a half people, in scorched-earth campaigns, rape, and aerial bombing of villages destroying dwellings and farming implements, amounting to possibly one of the worst current humanitarian crisis in the world; and

WHEREAS, the Sudanese government has been unable or unwilling to disarm, restrain, or control the Janjaweed militias (in a pattern repeated many times in the twenty-one years of Sudan’s civil wars); peace talks and a small African Union monitoring force have been unable to stop the atrocities; and the Security Council resolution of September 18, 2004 (on which China, Russia, Pakistan, and Algeria abstained) fails to enforce effective sanctions against the Sudanese government, while China has declared its intention to veto any future sanctions; and

WHEREAS, the picture in Darfur is further clouded by great-power rivalries over oil, arms, and influence in Sudan, reflected in the pro-regime UN position taken by China, which holds a 40% stake in Sudan oil and is a major arms supplier to the government, and the contrary anti-regime position taken by the U.S. government, which has declared genocide in Darfur, and passed a bill in Congress imposing sanctions; and

WHEREAS, as a federation of teacher unions, NYSUT wishes to express our direct solidarity with the teachers, students, civilian population, and people under arms in Darfur suffering under these conditions, without aligning ourselves with other political agendas on Sudan; therefore be it

RESOLVED, that NYSUT recommend that the AFT add the voice of teacher unions to human rights organizations, and call on the UN Security Council to pressure the government of Sudan to end the attacks on civilians, disarm the militias, and negotiate with the rebel movements in Darfur as part of the overall Sudan peace process; and be it further

RESOLVED, that NYSUT recommend that the AFT appeal to the AFL-CIO, and our colleagues in the organizations of the international labor movement to support this call for effective action by the UN Security Council to end the atrocities in Darfur.