

you read this, but did not switch gears to advocate also for the Christian refugees from Sudan's south when speaking to Israeli leaders.

Because of this, Israel is likely to allow only several hundred refugees from Darfur to stay in the country but deport the rest, who have also suffered greatly. The western nations that have condemned the genocide in Sudan should take in their fair share of refugees and all of them should pressure the UNHCR in Cairo to process refugees and provide for them.

In June, our kibbutz voted to take in two

Sudanese refugee families from Darfur, who now live next door to us. For the first time in many years, they are not living in fear. Our children play together and they are learning Hebrew. Our kibbutz home happens to be on the path that the Israelites took on their way to the Promised Land. Moses walked in these sands. The Torah reminds us 36 times to remember that we were strangers in the land of Egypt. We are no longer the strangers. While the State of Israel continues to demonstrate incompetence or cruelty in dealing with the Sudanese refugees, the people of Israel defiantly live in the shadow

Genocide and Development in Africa

William Recant

Genocide has no geographic, ethnic, or cultural boundaries. From the Killing Fields of Pol Pot's murderous regime in the late 1970s, to the machete massacres of 800,000 civilian innocents in Rwanda in 1994, to the mass graves in Kosovo Province where the United States Department of State coined the phrase "ethnic cleansing" in the early 1990s, our dehumanization of others has remained a constant. The Jewish people are not alone in the annals of history as victims of genocide and the cry "never again" rings hollow in the face of what is taking place today in Darfur, Sudan.

Africa is a continent that has been plagued by drought, famine, disease and poverty. Natural disasters and environmental damage play a large role in the lack of development through wide swaths of the African landscape. However, during the Great Famine of the early 1980s when hundreds of thousands perished for the lack of food and water in Ethiopia, man's hand cruelly inserted and allowed armies to be fed while children and elderly starved. The age of colonization followed by the age of HIV-AIDS coupled with the mass killings by murderous and ruthless dictators and illegitimate, immoral heads of state, have served to impede the potential development (political, economic, social, technological, etc.) of the African continent.

Colonization and imperialism play a sig-

nificant role in setting the foundation for the present socioeconomic difficulties that this "poor" continent continues to endure. African genocide, from Idi Amin's Uganda to the horrors of Rwanda and Darfur, has played a significant role in the hindrance of positive development both politically and economically. How can one speak of sustainable development when state-sponsored murder continues to displace millions, causing mass refugee movements into lands where they are not native and countries that themselves are having great difficulties in developing societies and economies?

Countries often close their borders fearing the long-term economic crisis that harboring refugees can create. Today, Chad and the Central African Republic face the challenge of how to handle the refugees from Darfur. Chad, ranked the world's fifth poorest country by the United Nations, faces a massive influx of Sudanese refugees. Janjaweed militia have brought the carnage into the refugee centers themselves. As Chad struggles to develop and move forward, it now must turn most of its attention to the refugee situation that threatens to fully halt any progress it has made over the last two decades.

While the global community continues at an ever-increasing pace to expand technological capabilities — i-phones and stem cell technology dominate today's global head-

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October 2007 Cheshvan 5768 To subscribe: 877-568-SHMA www.shma.com lines — development on the African subcontinent remains delayed and impaired. For all of the positive accomplishments of the Millennium Challenge, USAID, and other relief programs that diligently work toward creating self-sustaining communities, continuous violence coupled with the AIDS epidemic stifle any real chance of moving forward.

Jewish organizations have been actively involved in emergency relief assistance and development work throughout Africa. In 1994, when Goma Zaire was overwhelmed by Rwandan refugees and all development plans were put on hold to address the immediate issues of shelter, food, and medicine, the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee established medical centers to help those in greatest need. Thirteen years later, projects have been developed to assist the medical authorities in Zaire in the wake of the refugee movement; scholarships have been provided to hundreds of Rwandans and the Agohozo Shalom Youth Village broke ground this year. This residential village for those orphaned by genocide will include a high school and medical clinic to service 500 children. Rebuilding the rhythms of life in a part of the world that has

witnessed the greatest inhumanity imaginable is but one small step in rehabilitating this generation of survivors; this is the future of Africa.

Advocacy to stop the genocide has been led by the Save Darfur Coalition, and we should take pride in the fact that Jewish communal leaders and young people have been at the forefront of this effort. Through the Jewish Coalition for Disaster Response, psychosocial counselors have been dispatched to Chad, and Israeli volunteers are participating in a program developed by the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society. In Morocco, JDC is delivering wheelchairs for children at risk; in South Africa we are helping build educational alliances for HIV-AIDS awareness; in Ethiopia we have provided freshwater wells; and in Rwanda we are replicating a village that was originally built in Israel for child survivors of the Holocaust.

We work in countries where there is now a glimmer of hope. However, unless the global village awakens and deters state-sponsored murderous actions, true development will not be possible. Living without fear of violence is a precondition to development; unfortunately, we still have a long way to go.



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