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As 2007 draws to a close one issue stands out in my mind as the saddest of all Darfur.

Hundreds of thousands have died in a conflict charged with racism and the worst bloody-minded inhumanity the world has seen in sometime. Bringing peace to Darfur was never going to be a matter of "peacekeeping" as so many in Canada thought. Irwin Cotler, former Liberal justice minister, has been the best spokesman for the demand for action in Canada and the "**responsibility to protect.**"

But peace would only be won at the price of war and no NATO country was willing to pay that price. For that reason I have had little time for the Cotlers of Canada who are engaged in what I see as a disingenuous exercise that pretends peacekeeping and working with the Sudanese government will resolve the matter. If only more resources and will was shown, Cotler thinks lives could be saved. That is simply untrue.

Sudan's government has made it very clear that any force that it does not explicitly authorize will be treated as an invasion force not peacekeepers. Hence the tortured dance the world has witnessed for months as the African Union and the United Nations tried to manage this edict from the Sudanese government while attempting to stem the slaughter.

A couple of years back when Paul Martin was prime minister and hopeful of doing something to help end the slaughter in Darfur he received a rude awakening. The African Union and Sudan would not accept any "white" troops on African soil to enforce peace. Sudan makes the same demand today, a transparent attempt to paint Western peacemakers as colonialists rather than representatives of nations that want to see an end to the mayhem that has killed mostly black Africans in Darfur.

() The outcome for Canada was a small number of Canadians sent to Africa to help train AU troops to use equipment donated by Canada and other countries. Canadians would only carry light arms to protect themselves. They would not be in a position to defend anyone else.

Recently my colleague John Ivison criticized current Prime Minister Stephen Harper for not doing more on Darfur, but the idea that more can be done is grounded in a well-intended but naive appreciation of what Canada and other NATO countries face when talk of bringing peace to Darfur is raised. The reality check on Darfur has been provided by the UN's peacekeeping efforts that are now on the brink of failure.

() Peacekeeping died in Rwanda, a now famous phrase and truism many must accept. The AU and UN peacekeeping effort in Darfur is inadequate. What we are really talking about when we say we must do something to stop the violence in Darfur is a full-scale invasion supported by thousands of ground troops, air strikes and the destruction of the current Sudanese government. No NATO country Canada included see such a war as in their interests. And at

the end of the day, it's not.

Full text available at:

<http://network.nationalpost.com/np/blogs/fullcomment/archive/2007/12/24/john-turley-ewart-reality-check-on-darfur.aspx>