

THIS is a make-or-break year for Sudan, Africa's biggest country. In Oslo this week, donor countries pledged \$4.5 billion in aid to Sudan, but while I applaud the donors' generosity, promises alone are not enough.

Time is running out for the people of Sudan

The billions pledged this week can help. But hungry people cannot eat pledges. Through long and bitter experience we've learned that donor pledges often remain unfulfilled. In Cambodia, Rwanda, Liberia and elsewhere, a large percentage of promised funds failed to materialize, and many lives were lost as a result.

For example, in 1992, donors pledged \$880 million for Cambodian war rehabilitation; three years later, only \$460 million had been delivered. Nearly a year after donors promised \$1 billion to deal with the devastation caused by the 2003 earthquake in Bam, Iran, less than 20 percent of the money had been delivered.

Clearly, we must do better in Sudan. I urge donors to convert their generous pledges into cash without delay. And I urge the public to hold them accountable for their promises. This time, let us keep our commitments, and not turn a blind eye to a whole generation of Sudanese who have earned this peace and desperately need it

But more than food aid is needed - we also need to hold the perpetrators of violence in Sudan accountable. The International Commission of Inquiry, which I appointed at the request of the United Nations Security Council, has amply documented the murder, mass rapes, abductions and other atrocities committed in Darfur, as have many others. We know what is happening in Darfur. The question is, why are we not doing more to put an end to it?

Last summer, the Security Council, the United States and the European Union all said Darfur was their top priority. But it was only last month that the Security Council agreed to impose sanctions on people who commit violations of international law in Darfur and, in a historic first, to refer the situation in Darfur to the prosecutor of the International Criminal Court, thus taking a critical step toward ending the prevailing climate of impunity. Last week I handed the prosecutor the sealed list of those identified by the Commission of Inquiry

Our collective failure to provide a much larger force is as pitiful and inexcusable as the consequences are grave for the tens of thousands of families who are left unprotected.

We saw this all too well in Bosnia a decade ago. Back then, Bosnian civilians watched the aid trucks continue to roll while their neighbors were gunned-down in full daylight. "We will die with our stomachs full," they used to say. Are we now going to stand by and watch a replay in Darfur?

I also urge all those with influence over the warring parties to persuade them to return quickly to the negotiating table and agree on a political settlement

We know what we need: money to help win the peace in the south, more African Union boots

on the ground to help end the atrocities in Darfur, and political pressure to settle the conflict. It's that simple, and that essential.

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<http://www.nytimes.com/2005/04/13/opinion/13annan.html?hp>
[Annan-NYTimes_BillionsofPromisestoKeep_13April2005.doc](#)