

Diocese of Honolulu

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Office of the Bishop

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Statement by Bishop Larry Silva,
Bishop of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Honolulu,
on Divestment of Diocesan Funds from Companies Supporting Sudan

The ongoing genocide in the Darfur region of Sudan is one of the worst humanitarian crises in recent memory. Up to 400,000 members of our human family have been killed and 2.5 million have been displaced by Sudanese government forces and its allied Janjaweed militias. Women and children are routinely tortured, raped and murdered. The extent of the carnage is incalculable.

After the Rwandan genocide of 1994, the world, once again, said never again. And yet here we are -- again. The Roman Catholic Church in Hawaii believes the people of Hawaii are horrified by this repugnant assault on humanity.

The more difficult question for many is simply what can they do to stop it?

Among measures being taken by California and other mainland states, and being considered by the Hawaii legislature, is the divestment of funds from companies actively supporting Sudanese government.

The Hawaii Catholic Conference, the public policy arm of the Diocese of Honolulu, is a member of the Hawaii Coalition for Darfur and strongly supports Hawaii state legislative efforts to divest state employee retirement system funds. (HB34)

The diocese has already taken this step. I have directed our investors to immediately ensure full divestment of diocesan funds from these companies.

It is the very least we can do to support the people of Darfur.

I pray that this action, combined with many more urgent national and international efforts, will help bring about a stop to this ongoing humanitarian disaster.

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