



HAWAII COALITION FOR DARFUR

1149 Bethel St., Ste. 607 ■ Honolulu, HI 96813 ■ E-Mail: hawaiicoalitionfordarfur@hotmail.com ■ www.hawaiicoalitionfordarfur.com

May 3, 2007
For Immediate Release

For More Information, please contact:
Leanne Gillespie, 291-1702

Hawaii Will Profit From Genocide NO MORE

Hawaii Lawmakers Put Their Money Where Their Mouth Is &
Divest State Retirement Funds from Sudan

“The Hawaii Coalition for Darfur commends the Hawaii Legislature for its refusal to profit from the ongoing genocide in Sudan,” said Leanne Gillespie, founder of the Hawaii Coalition for Darfur. Gillespie was commenting on the Legislature’s passage of HB34, which requires the Employee Retirement System (ERS) to divest from companies that actively support the genocide complicit Sudanese government.

Darfur represents the first time in history that the United States government has declared a genocide while the atrocities were ongoing. 400,000 people have been killed and more than 2 million displaced. Rape and torture of women and children are documented tools of war in this genocide. “After Rwanda, the world said never again, and yet here we are,” Gillespie continued. “Time is running out for the people of Darfur. We simply can’t stay silent, we must get involved.”

More than 200 people got involved Sunday at the state capitol during a candlelight vigil to mark the worldwide Global Days for Darfur observances held in over 400 cities worldwide. Those in attendance were there, in part, to show support for HB34, which passed overwhelmingly in both chambers. Support for the bill came from a broad spectrum of individuals and organizations, including the University of Hawaii Professors’ Union, the League of Women Voters, Hawaii Family Forum and the Hawaii Catholic Conference. Hawaii’s only Catholic Bishop, Reverend Larry Silva, was among the first U. S. Catholic Bishops to order divestment of Church funds.

HB34 is now headed to Governor Linda Lingle’s desk. While the Governor has not yet taken a formal position on the proposal, Ted Liu, her director of the Department of Business Economic Development and Tourism (DBET) testified in strong support of the measure in the House Finance Committee, indicating his testimony was also offered on behalf of Lt. Governor Aiona.

“We are very hopeful Governor Lingle will be pleased and proud to sign HB34 making Hawaii among the first ten states in the nation unwilling to profit from the wholesale killing of men, women and children,” said Kelly Rosati, legislative liaison for the Coalition and Executive Director of Hawaii Family Forum & Hawaii Catholic Conference.

-----END-----