

Letter to newspapers for placing 15 September

The crisis in Darfur and eastern Chad remains one of the worst humanitarian crises in the world. The international community must not look the other way as the situation deteriorates.

While the strengthened UN African Union peacekeeping force agreed by the UN in July is welcome, it is unlikely to be fully deployed for another 12-18 months. The agreement of the force has also encouraged some in the international community to believe they have done all that they can.

Eight of us have just returned from the camps of eastern Chad, and for the women we met there, whose suffering is often overlooked, the resolution has changed nothing.

Insecurity continues; more people than ever in Darfur and Chad are in need of aid, and aid agencies are finding it harder than ever to keep them alive.

Tomorrow, (September 16th) tens of thousands of people across the world will mark the fourth global "Day for Darfur". They will call for urgent action to address the continuing murder, rape and devastation of lives in the Sudanese province.

As women from four continents we urge world leaders to step up the pressure on all parties in the conflict to agree to an immediate ceasefire. There must be more and better humanitarian assistance, and greater commitment to peace and peace-building. There is now a real window of opportunity for action - at the High Level meeting on Darfur in New York on September 21st, and at the United Nations General Assembly.

A comprehensive political solution is needed of course. But an effective ceasefire is the only way to put an immediate stop to the suffering affecting millions of people in Darfur and eastern Chad. Now is the time for world leaders to move beyond sympathy for the suffering. It is time to make it stop.

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<b>Hon. Asha Haji Elmi Amin</b>	Member of Somalia Transitional Parliament, (Somalia)
<b>Maria Barroso</b>	President of Pro Dignitate Association, (Portugal)
<b>Cate Blanchett</b>	Actress, (USA)
<b>Dr Herta Deaubler-Gmelin</b>	Member of German parliament, (Germany)
<b>Bineta Diop</b>	Director of Femmes Africa Solidarité, (Mali)
<b>Mia Farrow</b>	Actress and Humanitarian Activist, (UK)
<b>Mariella Frostrup</b>	Journalist and Broadcaster, (UK)
<b>Ana Gomes</b>	Portuguese MEP (Portugal)
<b>Germaine Greer</b>	Writer, Broadcaster and Academic, (Australia)
<b>Isabel Jonet</b>	President of the Alimentary Bank Against Hunger, (Portugal)
<b>Musimbi Kanyoro</b>	Secretary General of <i>World YWCA</i> , (Kenya)
<b>Angelique Kidjo</b>	Musician, (Benin)
<b>Kathleen Kennedy Townsend</b>	Former Lt. Governor of Maryland, (USA)
<b>Kerry Kennedy</b>	Founder, Robert F Kennedy Memorial Center for Human Rights, (USA)

<b>Manuela Ferreira Leite</b>	Former Finance Minister, (Portugal)
<b>Mariza</b>	UNICEF Ambassador (Portugal)
<b>Elle MacPherson</b>	Supermodel and Actress (Australia)
<b>Rosa Mota</b>	Former Athlete (Portugal)
<b>Dr. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala</b>	Distinguished Fellow, Brookings Institute, (Nigeria)
<b>Eva Padberg</b>	Supermodel, (Germany)
<b>Sigrid Rausing</b>	Founder and Trustee of the Sigrid Rausing Trust, (Sweden)
<b>Mary Robinson</b>	President, Realizing Rights, (Ireland)
<b>Dame Anita Roddick</b>	Entrepreneur, Founder of <i>The Body Shop</i> , (UK)
<b>Deborah Scroggins</b>	Writer and Author, (USA)
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