



请把奥运精神带到达尔福尔 BRING THE OLYMPIC DREAM TO DARFUR

To: JOURNALISTS COVERING THE OLYMPICS AND CHINA'S ROLE IN DARFUR

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RE: **SETTING THE RECORD STRAIGHT:**
There is no call for a boycott of the 2008 Beijing Olympics Regarding Darfur
(NOT FOR PUBLICATION)

Date: July 5, 2007

Dear Journalists

We want to alert news organizations to a widespread error in news coverage that is of great concern to the Darfur advocacy community. News stories concerning China, the 2008 Summer Olympics, and Darfur regularly refer to a "boycott" campaign on the part of Darfur activists.

We represent leading Darfur advocacy organizations – and have surveyed other major Darfur and anti-genocide organizations: there is no call for a boycott from within our community. Yet, media coverage regularly states that "critics" and "human rights groups" are calling for a boycott of the 2008 Olympics regarding Darfur. We do not know of any credible groups working on Darfur that are calling for a boycott of the 2008 Olympics.

When asked about a boycott, as they often are by reporters, the Chinese government says such an effort is "doomed to fail" and would hurt the Olympics. We agree. Unfortunately, by asking about a boycott threat and reporting the government's response, reporters have in effect created a phantom "boycott" movement.

Our recommendation:

Please do not report on a boycott unless you can cite a credible source organizing one.

Here are three recent examples of the common error:

Associated Press, June 25, 2007:

"China again came out against sanctions and argued against appeals by some critics for a boycott of the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games to force China to get tough with Khartoum." [This wire story was widely picked up – in print and on the web.]

BBC, May 18, 2007:

"Human Rights groups and some European and US politicians have called for the 2008 games to be boycotted because China continues to sell arms to Sudan." [It is true that a French politician called for a boycott and a few US Democratic presidential candidates said they would consider it, but there is no energy behind those calls.]

Voice of America, June 24, 2007

"The major advocacy groups around the Darfur issue are already recruiting high-profile Africans to mobilize ahead of a possible official call on the international community – including athletes and sponsors – for a full-scale global boycott."

What We Are Doing and Why We Don't Support a Boycott

There are many reasons we do not support a boycott. A boycott is inconsistent with the Olympic spirit -- the idea of international cooperation we seek to promote. Boycotts are divisive; they punish athletes, sporting communities, spectators, and companies around the world.

Dream for Darfur, an effort comprised of leading Darfur advocacy groups, is using the occasion of the Olympics to urge intensive leadership on the part of the Chinese government, as Olympic host and close partner of Sudan, to end the conflict in Darfur.

Our collective efforts focus on engagement – and we are pursuing several avenues to urge the Chinese government to intercede with leaders in Sudan: we are organizing symbolic "Olympic Torch Relays" (international and around the US), advertising campaigns, coordinated student organizing, and private advocacy with individuals and groups associated with the Olympics.

We will become a major force as the Games approach, urging China to "Bring the Olympic Dream to Darfur." If China is unable to influence Khartoum in the short term, and the genocide threatens to be ongoing during the games, we will shift our campaign to focus even more intensively on the Olympics: we will "Bring Darfur to the Olympic Dream" by attending the Games (via news and other media who go to Beijing, athletes, and spectators from around the world who will show their respectful support for Darfur at the Games). In fact, the spotlight of the Olympics and China's role in Darfur is exactly what the Darfur situation needs to take its message to the world.