



## The Darfur Consortium

*African and International  
Civil Society Action for Darfur*

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### **UN Must Reject Nigerian Proposal for African Panel**

(NEW YORK, March 18, 2005)— The Darfur Consortium, an umbrella group of about 40 primarily Africa-based civil society organizations, today expressed concern at the proposal by the Nigerian government for an African Panel to pursue justice in Darfur and reiterated its call for an immediate referral of the situation in Darfur to the International Criminal Court (ICC).

The Darfur Consortium asked Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo to uphold the wishes and aspirations of many African governments that prefer the ICC to any other mechanism to try the heinous crimes committed in Darfur.

“As chairman of the Africa Union, Mr. Obasanjo has a particular obligation to respect the wishes of the African continent,” said Dismas Nkunda, a representative of the Consortium.

“Not only do many African governments see a referral to the ICC as the best way of bringing justice and accountability to Darfur, but the people of Darfur also see such referral as a protection mechanism from the continued attacks by government forces. Mr. Obasanjo should be supporting these efforts instead of derailing them.”

Moreover, the International Criminal Court is supported by African states, a majority of whom have signed the Rome Statute establishing the Court and many of whom are parties to the ICC.

While the Darfur Consortium recognizes that the ICC alone will not achieve the long term peace and reconciliation that Darfur needs, it sees a referral by the Security Council as an essential element in a range of measures that must be taken to ensure peace, justice and reconciliation in Darfur.

“The Security Council must stand united and send even a stronger message that such impunity will not be tolerated by immediately referring the situation in Darfur to the ICC,” Dismas Nkunda added.

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