

# Lawmakers, actor urge tough action in Sudan's Darfur: Don Cheadle weighs in

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Actor Don Cheadle, nominated for an Oscar for his role in *Hotel Rwanda*, a film about the 1994 mass killings in Africa, joined a bipartisan group of U.S. lawmakers to call for stronger measures to end the civil war in Sudan's Darfur region.

"This killing goes on day in, day out," said Representative Ed Royce (R., Calif.), who led a congressional delegation with Cheadle to Sudan last month. Royce chairs the House international relations subcommittee on Africa. The rampages are perpetrated by Arab militia armed and backed by the Sudanese government in fighting black African rebels.

The U.S. government has labeled the Darfur fighting genocide by the Khartoum government, but a United Nations-appointed commission has concluded there is insufficient evidence that Khartoum had a state policy of genocide, the *Los Angeles Times* reported January 29. The UN report, not made public immediately, was given January 27 to Secretary General Kofi Annan. Diplomatic sources told the *Times*, however, that the report named individuals who may have acted with a "genocidal intention" and recommended that those cases be referred to the International Criminal Court.

In his January 27 news conference in Washington, Cheadle drew a parallel between Darfur and the massacres in Rwanda that killed more than 500,000 people. "People saw the film and said, 'Wow, that's terrible. What happened? Wish I had known.' Now you know," Cheadle said. -*Religion News Service*