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**Written statement* submitted by the Consultative Council of Jewish Organizations
(CCJO), a non-governmental organization in special consultative status**

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[7 December 2006]

* This written statement is issued, unedited, in the language(s) received from the submitting non-governmental organization(s).

You shall not stand idly by the blood of your neighbour.
(Leviticus, 19:16)

Introduction

The Jewish people have been the quintessential victims of what happens when others stand silently by in the face of discrimination and oppression. However, the Jewish tradition emphasises that the Jewish response to persecution is different. The most repeated commandment in the Torah (appearing thirty six times) is not to discriminate against the stranger or the other since we Jews were once strangers ourselves. Moreover, the Tradition teaches that every generation must view itself as if personally redeemed from the slavery of Egypt, and so we are to re-interpret ourselves today, in some sense, as still strangers and others. Consequently, this perspective forces us not to take our current freedoms for granted but to recognise our ongoing responsibility not to turn a blind eye to the persecution of other peoples in the world today.

It is precisely because of our history, that we intimately understand the horrors of genocide and crimes against humanity. Though the Holocaust haunts the Jewish consciousness, we believe that this memory can be transformed into a positive force for good:

- (1) To serve as a reminder to all mankind of the permanent risk to humanity from those who kill, enslave and torture to advance their false ideologies of racial, religious or ethnic superiority and hatred.
- (2) To speak out, take action and prevent others from facing similar massacre and annihilation.
- (3) To ensure that 'Never Again' becomes humanity's pledge that no human being will ever again be treated as we were.

Despite the sad fact that throughout history advances in international law and human rights have been the results of horrifying catastrophes, all prior advances in this regard are dwarfed by the impact of the Holocaust.

Mass Killings and Genocide: UN Policy

On the general question of dealing with mass killings and genocide in general and in Darfur, we wish to note that:

1. *CCJO calls for the end of impunity through the effective punishment of perpetrators of genocide and crimes against humanity.*
2. *CCJO stresses the need for reliable early warnings of genocide and crimes against humanity.*
3. *CCJO calls for the international community to remain vigilant to early warning reports of genocide and crimes against humanity, and to respond swiftly to avert all imminent threats.*

4. *CCJO calls for the international community to provide long term support for the victims of genocide and crimes against humanity.*
5. *CCJO calls for the reform of other UN bodies and working procedures to allow for timely and effective response to gross abuse of human rights.*

Darfur

Throughout the last few years the people of the Darfur region of the Sudan have been suffering from appalling episodes of violence: over a million have been displaced from their homes, hundreds of villages have been burnt and destroyed and the civilian population has been the target of direct attacks, including widespread killings and rape. On 18 September 2004 the Security Council called for the establishment of an International Commission of Inquiry on Darfur to determine whether acts of genocide had been carried out in Darfur, and the Commission was established a month later. Though the Commission was not able to reach an unequivocal conclusion that acts of genocide had been committed, it did describe them as likely to amount to war crimes and crimes against humanity. Consequently, the situation in Darfur was referred to the International Criminal Court. CCJO welcomed this referral and subsequently raised the Darfur issue before the 2005 UN Commission on Human Rights.

Therefore, CCJO requests:

- *The implementation of a United Nations peacekeeping force in the Darfur region to bolster the efforts of the African Union force.*
- *The sending of an independent forensic panel to be sent to Darfur in order to gather evidence in order to assist both the work of the UN Human Rights Council and the International Criminal Court.*

Moreover, CCJO calls for:

- *The UN Human Rights Council and other agencies to be given the mandate and resources to take immediate, concrete and effective steps to end the ongoing systematic criminal atrocities taking place in Darfur.*
