

The Hon Alexander Downer MHR
Minister for Foreign Affairs
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

September 25, 2006

Dear Mr. Downer

May I express, on behalf of the executive and membership of our association, the African Studies Association of Australasia and the Pacific, our strong support for the speech you recently delivered at the 61st session of the United Nations General Assembly.

We were especially glad that you made your frank remarks about the situation in Darfur. The African Union alone is clearly unable to meet the challenge and we fully support your call for UN intervention, believing that the killing and oppression in Darfur is a challenge to the international community that must be met by international action.

It is probably true that from time to time members of AFSAAP wish that the government were able to do more in regard to a number of issues that are pressing in Africa, but we recognize that the capacity of an Australian government to intervene is limited in many ways and we appreciate all the more your strong and exemplary words on this occasion.

I have recently taken over from Professor Deryck Schreuder as president of the Association and am glad to be able to write in this way, adding my own personal support to the resolution carried unanimously by the membership at our annual general meeting at this university last week.

Yours sincerely

Dr Geoffrey Hawker
President AFSAAP
Head, Department of Politics and International Relations

Tel (02) 9850 8885
Fax (02) 9850 6064
Email ghawker@humn.mq.edu.au