

The David S. Wyman Institute for Holocaust Studies

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70 Holocaust Scholars Urge Halting Aid to Countries That Host Sudan Leader

WASHINGTON - Seventy leading Holocaust and genocide scholars have signed a letter urging the Obama administration to cut aid to countries that host visits by Sudanese President Omar Hassan al-Bashir, who has been indicted by the International Criminal Court for his role in the Darfur genocide.

The House Appropriations Committee recently adopted an amendment by Virginia congressman Frank Wolf to suspend non-humanitarian U.S. aid to countries that welcome Bashir. But there have been reports that the State Department is trying to block the bill before it becomes law.

The 70 scholars directed their letter of protest to Obama adviser Dr. Samantha Power, who heads the recently-established Atrocities Prevention Board. The letter was organized by the David S. Wyman Institute for Holocaust Studies, in Washington, D.C.,

"It is important for the United States to send a clear message to the international community that Bashir, the world's most notorious perpetrator of genocide, deserves to be treated as a pariah," the scholars wrote.

They pointed out that Dr. Power, in her Pulitzer Prize winning book, *'A Problem from Hell': America and the Age of Genocide*, urged the U.S. government to use "economic sanctions" and pressure on its allies to combat genocide. The Wolf Amendment "does exactly that," the 65 scholars argued. They urged Power and the Board "to do everything possible to ensure that the Wolf Amendment is not diluted or undermined during the upcoming House-Senate negotiations over the final wording of the foreign aid appropriations legislation."

Dr. Rafael Medoff, director of the Wyman Institute, said: "Halting aid to those who host Bashir would be the first concrete step the U.S. has taken to isolate the Butcher of Darfur and pave the way for his arrest. If the Obama administration is serious about punishing perpetrators of genocide, it should support the Wolf Amendment."

The signatories include Rabbi Dr. Irving 'Yitz' Greenberg, former chairman of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum; award-winning author Dr. Daniel Goldhagen; Prof. Rev. John Pawlikowski, who chairs the U.S. Holocaust Museum's Subcommittee on Church Relations; Prof. Deborah Dwork of Clark University, founder of the first graduate program in Holocaust and genocide studies in the United States; and Prof. David S. Wyman, author of *The Abandonment of the Jews*.

The text of the letter, and the complete list of signatories, follows below.

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The David S. Wyman Institute for Holocaust Studies

June 14, 2012

*Dr. Samantha Power, Chair
Atrocities Prevention Board
Washington, DC*

Dear Dr. Power,

As scholars who have written or taught about the Holocaust or other genocides, we applaud the adoption by the House Appropriations Committee of Rep. Frank Wolf's amendment to suspend non-humanitarian U.S. aid to countries that host visits by Sudanese President Omar Hassan al-Bashir, who has been indicted by the International Criminal Court for his central role in the Darfur genocide.

It is important for the United States to send a clear message to the international community that Bashir, the world's most notorious perpetrator of genocide, deserves to be treated as a pariah.

In your Pulitzer Prize winning book, 'A Problem from Hell': America and the Age of Genocide, you wrote that in the fight against genocide, America's choice is not "doing nothing or unilaterally sending in the marines." You argued that there are many steps short of war that should be taken, such as "economic sanctions" and "encouraging U.S. allies...to step up their commitments and capacities." (pp. 513-514)

The Wolf Amendment does exactly that--it uses economic sanctions to encourage America's allies to step up their commitments to fight against perpetrators of genocide.

We urge the Atrocities Prevention Board to do everything possible to ensure that the Wolf Amendment is not diluted or undermined during the upcoming House-Senate negotiations over the final wording of the foreign aid appropriations legislation.

Cordially,

*Prof. Irving Abella
Shiff Chair of Jewish History
York University*

*Prof. Marie L. Baird
Duquesne University*

*Prof. Karyn Ball
University of Alberta*

*Prof. Alan L. Berger
Director, Center for the Study of Values and Violence after Auschwitz
Florida Atlantic University*

*Prof. Daniel Burston
Chair, Psychology Department
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Seton Hill University*

*Prof. Abram De Swaan
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Co-Director, National Catholic Center for Holocaust Education
Seton Hall University*

*Prof. Deborah Dwork
Founding Director, Strassler Center for Holocaust and Genocide Studies*

Clark University

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Chair of the Board, Institute for the Study of Genocide
Founding President (emer.), International Association of Genocide Scholars

Prof. Mark Frisch
Duquesne University

Prof. Zev Garber
Chair (emer.), Jewish Studies and Philosophy
Los Angeles Valley College

Dr. Edyta Gawron
Jagiellonian University (Krakow, Poland)

Prof. Jay Geller
Vanderbilt Divinity School

Dr. Danuel Jonah Goldhagen
Author of 'Worse Than War'

Rabbi Dr. David Golinkin
President, Schechter Institute of Jewish Studies

Prof. Gershon Greenberg
American University

Rabbi Dr. Irving 'Yitz' Greenberg
Past Chair, U.S. Holocaust Memorial Council (2000-2002)

Dr. Beth Griech-Poelle
Bowling Green State University

Dr. Alex Grobman
America-Israel Friendship League

Dr. Elvira U. Groezinger
University of Potsdam & Freie Universitaet Berlin (ret.)

Prof. Herb Hirsch
Co-Editor, Genocide Studies & Prevention
Virginia Commonwealth University

Prof. Steven Leonard Jacobs
The University of Alabama

Prof. Aristotle Kallis
Lancaster University (UK)

Dr. Rebecca Kook
Ben Gurion University

Dr. Neil J. Kressel
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*Prof. Fred Lazin
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*Prof. Paul A. Levine
Uppsala University*

*Prof. Marcia Sachs Littell
Richard Stockton College of New Jersey*

*Prof. Kenneth L. Marcus
President, Louis D. Brandeis Center for Human Rights Under Law*

*Dr. Rafael Medoff
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Columbus, OH*

*Prof. Rochelle L. Millen
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*Prof. Paul Miller
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*Tali Nates
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*Prof. Zsuzsanna Ozsvath
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University of Texas-Dallas*

*Prof. John T. Pawlikowski, OSM
Catholic Theological Union
Chair, Subcommittee on Church Relations of the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Council*

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Central Missouri State University*

*Prof. Paolo Pezzino
Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei, Rome*

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Marquette University (emer.)*

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University of North Texas*

*Seymour D. Reich
Co-chair (emer.), International Catholic-Jewish Historical Commission*

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Co-founder (ret.), Tolerance Resource Center
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Prof. Sonja Schoepf Wentling
Concordia College

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University of Massachusetts - Amherst (emer.)

Prof. Randall C. Zachman
University of Notre Dame

Prof. John C. Zimmerman
University of Nevada - Las Vegas

Dr. Bat-Ami Zucker
Bar Ilan University

(Institutions listed for identification purposes only.)

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ABOUT THE WYMAN INSTITUTE: The David S. Wyman Institute for Holocaust Studies, located in Washington, D.C., is a research and education institute focusing on America's response to the Holocaust. It is named in honor of the eminent historian and author of the 1984 best-seller *The Abandonment of the Jews*, the most important and influential book concerning the U.S. response to the Nazi genocide.

The Institute's Advisory Committee includes Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Elie Wiesel, Members of Congress, and other luminaries.
The Institute's Academic Council includes more than fifty leading professors of the Holocaust, American history, and Jewish history.
The Institute's Arts & Letters Council, chaired by Cynthia Ozick, includes prominent artists, writers, musicians, and filmmakers.

(A complete list is available upon request.)