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Crisis in Darfur Worsens — Spreads Into Chad

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As many had warned, the crisis in the Darfur region of Sudan has now spread into neighboring Chad, with Arab gunmen crossing the border and creating a new refugee emergency. As _The New York Times_ reports:

> _Arab gunmen from Darfur have pushed across the desert and entered Chad, stealing cattle, burning crops and killing anyone who resists. The lawlessness has driven at least 20,000 Chadians from their homes, making them refugees in their own country._

> _Hundreds of thousands more people in this area, along with 200,000 Sudanese who fled here for safety, find themselves caught up in a growing conflict between Chad and Sudan, which have a long history of violence and meddling in each other's affairs._

"_You may have thought the terrible situation in Darfur couldn't get worse, but it has," Peter Takirambudde, executive director of the Africa division of Human Rights Watch, said in a recent statement. "Sudan's policy of arming militias and letting them loose is spilling over the border, and civilians have no protection from their attacks, in Darfur or in Chad._"

The United Nations has promised a peacekeeping force, but no personnel will arrive on the ground for months to come. President George W. Bush has called for NATO involvement. Meanwhile _Aljazeera_ reports that the Khartoum government is warning against any uninvited international response:

> "_We are strongly opposed to any foreign intervention in Sudan, and Darfur will be a graveyard for any foreign troops venturing to enter," [Sudanese president] al-Bashir was quoted on Sunday as saying._

This news should remind evangelical Christians that we can exert a real influence on American policy in this area. [See my previous column, "Mass Murder in Slow Motion--Genocide in Darfur."]