

January 28, 2007

## **AU: Insist Sudan Allows Darfur Protection Force**

*African Leaders Must Block Sudan's Bid for AU Chair*

New York — African heads of state meeting in Addis Ababa this week should insist that Sudan accept the immediate deployment of a strong international protection force to Darfur and that Sudan end its abusive policies, Human Rights Watch said in a letter to African Union members published today.

In the [letter](#), Human Rights Watch said African leaders should use their AU summit meeting in Addis Ababa on January 29-30 to reject Sudan's latest bid to become chair of the African Union.

Human Rights Watch also said African leaders must warn Sudanese President Omar El Bashir that if he does not immediately support protection efforts in Darfur, then he will face targeted sanctions. African leaders should underline this message by rejecting Sudan's chairmanship of the African Union.

Sudan has been lobbying to become chair of the African Union since 2005, despite its record of crimes against humanity and war crimes in Darfur. In January 2006, African heads of state postponed Sudan's chairmanship and awarded the position to Congo (Brazzaville), but the chairmanship is due to be assumed by an east African country under the AU's principle of sub-regional rotation.

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