



## Overview of RenéCassin's Activities on Darfur

RenéCassin's priority international campaign from 2005 – 2008 was to bring a peaceful resolution to the conflict in Darfur. Since 2003, it was reported that killings, rapes and other atrocities were being perpetrated by the Sudanese government against the people of Darfur. 10,000 Darfuris were being killed every month and 2 million people had been made homeless.

As a Jewish group, RenéCassin was greatly concerned by the possibility of an emerging genocide taking place in Darfur whilst the international community stood by. We joined the Protect Darfur coalition, coordinated by Crisis Action UK, and played an active role in efforts to raise awareness of the situation in Darfur and to lobby the British government to play a leading role in international actions to bring a peaceful end to the conflict in Darfur.

### Global Day for Darfur

Since the start of the conflict in 2003, international Global Days for Darfur have been held annually to urge the international community to take action on Darfur. Themed demonstrations take place around the world and NGOs carry out intense advocacy efforts on Global Day for Darfur.



In the UK, the Protect Darfur Coalition organised demonstrations in central London to mark Global Day for Darfur, attended by thousands of protestors. RenéCassin took responsibility for organising stewarding for Global Day for Darfur rallies, coordinating with the police and the Darfuri community in Britain to ensure that demonstrations were staged peacefully.

We also encouraged the British Jewish community to play an active role in Global Day for Darfur and are proud that the Jewish community was well-represented amongst the protestors. Jewish community leaders addressed protestors at the rallies, alongside politicians, journalists and other faith leaders.

In 2008, the theme of Global Day for Darfur was children affected by the conflict. Sarah Kaiser, Director of RenéCassin, accompanied a delegation of British and Darfuri children to 10 Downing Street (*pictured right*), where they met with Shahid Malik MP, then Minister for International Development.

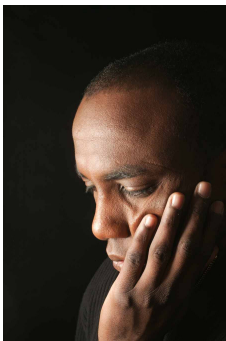


Global Day for Darfur was successful in securing commitments from governments around the world to take action on Darfur: the American government called the situation in Darfur a 'genocide' and Gordon Brown committed to hosting conciliatory talks between the region's factions in Downing Street.

## Darfuri Asylum Seekers

RenéCassin also campaigned to protect Darfuri asylum seekers in the UK from the threat of deportation to Sudan. The Home Office repeatedly attempted to deport Darfuri asylum seekers to Khartoum, the capital of Sudan, in the face of evidence that Darfuris faced torture, death and imprisonment there.

On each occasion, RenéCassin coordinated campaigns from the Jewish community to protest against the deportations:



- In December 2007, we sent 10,000 Chanukah cards (*pictured*) from the Jewish community to Gordon Brown in protest at the imminent deportations
- In July 2008, we sent a joint letter from 10 major Jewish organisations to the Home Office and gained support for our campaign from *The Jewish News*, who urged their readership to join the protest

On both occasions, the deportations were halted as a result of public pressure.

In November 2009, we welcomed the government's decision to grant asylum to all non-Arab Darfuris, benefitting an estimated 500 Darfuri asylum seekers.

## Ambassadors for Darfur

RenéCassin developed Year 12 pupils from 5 Jewish schools into 'ambassadors' for Darfur. We ran a series of Darfur awareness days for the pupils, which educated them on the facts about Darfur and empowered them to try and make a difference within their school and community. The pupils went on to raise awareness of the crisis in Darfur, raised money at school events to support Darfur appeals, made patches for a 'Darfur quilt' and ran political campaigns.



## Justice for Victims

The Protect Darfur Coalition called for the International Criminal Court (ICC) to prosecute Sudanese leaders for war crimes in Darfur to achieve some measure of justice for victims. In March 2009, the ICC issued an arrest warrant for Omar al-Bashir, President of Sudan, sending out a clear message that there can be no immunity for perpetrators of atrocities.

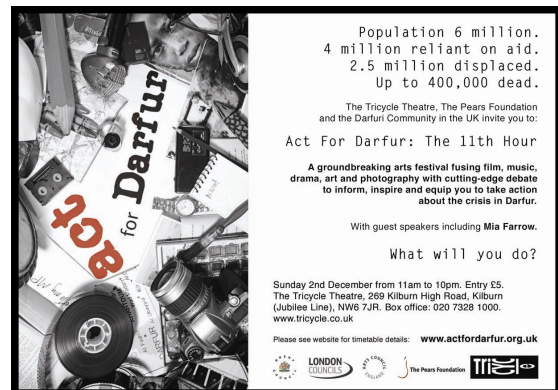
## Act for Darfur

In May 2007, RenéCassin staged the innovative *Act for Darfur* event in partnership with 4 other Jewish organisations. More than 300 people attended.

*Act for Darfur* aimed to give participants the information and tools needed to take action on Darfur. Following an introduction about the situation, participants were given a choice of workshops which demonstrated how they could use their existing skills in campaigning, education, events management, legal advocacy, the arts and the media to bring about an end to the crisis in Darfur.

Participants in every workshop came away with a concrete plan of action and commitment to the campaign. Follow-up actions have included:

- The creation of educational materials for schools and youth groups
- The establishment of a *Lawyers for Darfur* group which has supported Darfuri asylum seekers and gathered evidence for appeals
- A number of fundraising and awareness evenings, staged by participants
- *Act for Darfur* – a day of events at the Tricycle Theatre, using the arts to raise awareness about the situation in Darfur amongst new audiences (*pictured*)



## International Campaigning

RenéCassin has repeatedly used our access to international human rights institutions to draw attention to the crisis in Darfur. We have made interventions on Darfur regularly at the United Nations Human Rights Council and lobbied the international community to take robust action on Darfur.

We welcomed the UN Security Council Resolution to send peacekeeping forces to the region and continue to monitor the situation.