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Mayor proclaims December National Human Rights Month Newton Human Rights Commission Celebrates Annual Human Rights Awardees and Issues Darfur Initiative

The Newton Human Rights Commission joins Mayor David Cohen in recognizing December 2007 as National Human Rights Month.

At the 23rd annual Newton Human Rights Awards ceremony held November 29, Dr. Howard Wishnie received the award for his outstanding activism to educate the public to the situation in Darfur and what can be done to help the people there. Dr. Wishnie is a Newton resident and psychiatrist, and has been active in a number of human rights issues over the decades.

Student award recipients included David Fisher and Kaitlin Sanders of Newton South High School, and Julijana Englander and Ali Zaide of Newton North High School. Each student was recognized for his/her contributions and leadership on human rights issues. Fisher had been a lead organizer in the Newton South STAND (Student Anti-Genocide Coalition) concert that raised over \$20,000 for the Save Darfur effort earlier this year. Mayor Cohen presented Dr. Wishnie with his award and said the work that Wishnie and the students are doing on this issue goes to the very core of human rights around the world.

The Human Rights Commission is asking the residents of Newton to join us in helping to spread awareness of the deteriorating conditions in Darfur as a result of the ongoing genocide perpetrated against the people of Darfur. In the spirit of this recognition, we are asking Newton residents, businesses and all houses of worship to obtain ~~%~~SAVE DARFUR+or ~~%~~NOT ON OUR WATCH+signs and display them on their front lawns. We encourage all people from all walks of life to stand with us and stop the spread of man~~s~~ inhumanity to man and put an END to genocide.

Mayor Cohen stated ~~%~~This small step can raise awareness and unite our community against the unspeakable and inhumane atrocities has claimed the lives of as many as 200,000 thousands of innocent people in Sudan, displaced more than 2 million, and has incited widespread rape and torture. There is no more pressing need in the world today than to end the genocide in Darfur, and every one of us can play a small role in doing it.+

For more information on how to obtain signs please email NSNS_Stand@yahoo.com

The Darfur situation has become more grim as the recent peace conference has failed and the UN-African Peace Force has again been delayed in formation and deployment. For more ways to help, visit www.GenocideIntervention.net. Contributions can be made to their Civilian Protection Fund, specifically to protect women and girls in the North Darfur refugee camps.

For more information about the Newton Human Rights Commission, contact Beverly Droz at Newton City Hall, 617-796-1290 or bdroz@newtonma.gov, or visit www.newtonhumanrights.org.