

MSU students from a number of campus organizations and other interested individuals march to increase awareness of the October 8 South Asia earthquake and raise funds for relief projects before a late-October MSU football game.



International Students Lead South Asian Earthquake Relief Campaign

In a combined effort, several MSU international student clubs raised more than \$10,000 for earthquake relief, donating the funds to organizations providing shelter to the homeless victims of a 7.6 magnitude earthquake felt across northern Pakistan, the disputed region of Kashmir, and in parts of India and Afghanistan on October 8, 2005. The earthquake was one of the deadliest ever recorded in the region, with a death toll exceeding 80,000 and millions left homeless.

Collaborating clubs included the Pakistan Students Association (PSA), Kashmir Student League, Muslim Student Association, RAHEEMS (Rural Areas Health and Education Enhancement by Michigan Students), and Islamic Medical Student Association. The students raised funds through bake sales and other events, at the same time increasing awareness across campus of the victims' plight. Funds were dispersed through a South Asia Earthquake Relief Fund in the International Studies and Programs dean's office.

A student-organized Earthquake Awareness Walk before the October 29 MSU home football game

netted \$1,300. After President Lou Anna K. Simon spoke at the event kick-off at the MSU Union, approximately 50 students and supporters carrying signs and donation boxes proceeded to Spartan Stadium where they solicited funds from people attending the game. The march then proceeded to the International Center, where Adil Ibrahim, Pakistan Student Association member and one of the event's organizers, praised the participants.

In her October 13 blog entry, Simon expressed concern over the earthquake disaster. "These kinds of events remind us of just how fragile society's safety net can be," she wrote. "And universities—not just Michigan State University—have shown tremendous generosity in responding to them. But beyond the immediate relief efforts, universities must also accept intellectual leadership for repairing and restructuring that safety net."

For more information about the relief efforts, visit the PSA website at www.msu.edu/~pakistan

—Ghazala Khan

Teach-in Addresses Crisis in Sudan

"Genocide." "The worst humanitarian crisis of our time."

Expanding accounts of ethnic violence in the Darfur region of Sudan, as well as heightened levels of condemnation by the U.S. government, the United Nations, and many other international agencies, prompted several MSU organizations to sponsor a teach-in on September 30, 2005 to help bring the reality of this tragedy to the attention of the MSU community.

Militia groups known as Janjaweed, allegedly backed by the Sudanese government, have systematically attacked Sudanese Africans in villages in Darfur, killing, raping, destroying and confiscating property, and driving many people into refugee camps. Recent estimates by the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs suggest that nearly 3.4 million people in Darfur are directly affected by this violence, including 1.7 million children under 18. "Imagine all of East Lansing murdered and one in five Michigan residents fleeing their homes in terror," said David Wiley, director of the MSU African Studies Center, professor of sociology, and a panelist for the teach-in. "That's the catastrophe of Sudan, and the United States is in a position to use its power to do something about it."

The day-long event included information tables in the International Center lobby hosted by student and community groups concerned about Sudan and conflict in Africa. Among those participating were STAND (Spartans Taking Action Now: Darfur) and the Michigan Peace Team. Formal presentations and a screening of the film *A Great Wonder*, an award-winning documentary about three Sudanese orphans, took place in the International Center Library.

Visiting scholar Ali Ali-Dinar gave the keynote lecture, "The Genocide in Darfur: Local and International Responses." Ali-Dinar is outreach director of the African Studies Center at the University of Pennsylvania, president of the Sudan Studies Association, and founder of the Darfur Information Center online. "As a Darfur native and U.S.-based scholar, Ali-Dinar was able to comment on the situation in Darfur from multiple perspectives, giving valuable insight into the most effective ways to respond to this conflict from halfway around the world," said



Students representing STAND (Spartans Taking Action Now: Darfur) participated in various aspects of the September 2005 teach-in about the humanitarian crisis in the Darfur region of Sudan. In this photo, Lindsey Hutchison (right) discusses the situation with an unidentified student (left) while T.J. Bartczak (also standing) and Lindsey Reinhart (seated) look on. In addition to answering questions and handing out information, they collected aid money for World Food Programme operations in Darfur.

Kari Bergstrom Henquinet, assistant director of the MSU Women and International Development Program and one of the event organizers.

In addition to Wiley, panelists included Rita Edozie, assistant professor in MSU's James Madison College; Lindsey Hutchison, MSU international relations junior and student leader of STAND; and Benaiah Yongo-Bure, Sudanese assistant professor of liberal studies at Kettering University.

After the panel discussion, student Zacharia Akol and faculty member Yacob Fisseha, both representing the Sudan Awareness and Support Group, commented on the Darfur crisis as well as broader Sudan issues in which their organization is involved.

Other teach-in sponsors included several MSU-affiliated centers and programs, including the Center for Advanced Study of International Development, the Women and International Development Program, the African Studies Center, and the International Studies and Programs dean's office.

The MSU African Studies Center maintains a web-based resource, "Sudan, Darfur, and Foreign Policy: A Resource Guide," available at <http://africa.msu.edu/news/sudanguide.php>