

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

OPINION

The Genocide Olympics

By RONAN FARROW and MIA FARROW

March 28, 2007; Page A17

"One World, One Dream" is China's slogan for its 2008 Olympics. But there is one nightmare that China shouldn't be allowed to sweep under the rug. That nightmare is Darfur, where more than 400,000 people have been killed and more than two-and-a-half million driven from flaming villages by the Chinese-backed government of Sudan.

That so many corporate sponsors want the world to look away from that atrocity during the games is bad enough. But equally disappointing is the decision of artists like director Steven Spielberg -- who quietly visited China this month as he prepares to help stage the Olympic ceremonies -- to sanitize Beijing's image. Is Mr. Spielberg, who in 1994 founded the Shoah Foundation to record the testimony of survivors of the holocaust, aware that China is bankrolling Darfur's genocide?

China is pouring billions of dollars into Sudan. Beijing purchases an overwhelming majority of Sudan's annual oil exports and state-owned China National Petroleum Corp. -- an official partner of the upcoming Olympic Games -- owns the largest shares in each of Sudan's two major oil consortia. The Sudanese government uses as much as 80% of proceeds from those sales to fund its brutal Janjaweed proxy militia and purchase their instruments of destruction: bombers, assault helicopters, armored vehicles and small arms, most of them of Chinese manufacture. Airstrips constructed and operated by the Chinese have been used to launch bombing campaigns on villages. And China has used its veto power on the U.N. Security Council to repeatedly obstruct efforts by the U.S. and the U.K. to introduce peacekeepers to curtail the slaughter.

As one of the few players whose support is indispensable to Sudan, China has the power to, at the very least, insist that Khartoum accept a robust international peacekeeping force to protect defenseless civilians in Darfur. Beijing is uniquely positioned to put a stop to the slaughter, yet they have so far been unabashed in their refusal to do so.

But there is now one thing that China may hold more dear than their unfettered access to Sudanese oil: their successful staging of the 2008 Summer Olympics. That desire may provide a lone point of leverage with a country that has otherwise been impervious to all criticism.

Whether that opportunity goes unexploited lies in the hands of the high-profile supporters of these Olympic Games. Corporate sponsors like Johnson & Johnson, Coca-Cola, General Electric and McDonalds, and key collaborators like Mr. Spielberg, should be put on notice. For there is another slogan afoot, one that is fast becoming viral amongst advocacy groups; rather than "One World, One Dream," people are beginning to speak of the coming "Genocide Olympics."

Does Mr. Spielberg really want to go down in history as the Leni Riefenstahl of the Beijing Games? Do the various television sponsors around the world want to share in that shame? Because they will. Unless, of course, all of them add their singularly well-positioned voices to the growing calls for Chinese action to end the slaughter in Darfur.

Imagine if such calls were to succeed in pushing the Chinese government to use its leverage over Sudan to protect civilians in Darfur. The 2008 Beijing Olympics really could become an occasion for pride and celebration, a truly international honoring of the authentic spirit of "one world" and "one dream."

Mr. Farrow, a student at Yale Law School, traveled to Darfur as a UNICEF spokesperson in 2004 and 2006. Ms. Farrow, an actor, has traveled twice to Darfur and twice to neighboring Chad. She has recently returned from Darfur's border with the Central African Republic.