

December 9, 2010

The Honorable Patrick J. Leahy, Chair
The United States Senate
Committee on the Judiciary
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Leahy:

As representatives of organizations working to promote the full enforceability of human rights norms in the United States, we write to voice our continued support of the U.S. Senate Committee on the Judiciary's Subcommittee on Human Rights and the Law. We ask you to consider the Subcommittee's significant impact over the less than four years since its inception, and we urge you to ensure that the Subcommittee will continue its crucial work during the 112th Congress.

We greatly appreciate that in creating the Subcommittee you took an important step to ensure that the United States Government approaches its human rights treaty commitments as part of domestic law, as our Constitution requires. The urgency of the vital issues tackled by the Subcommittee has not diminished, and the need for a venue to examine human rights law and enforcement issues persists.

As you know, since its inaugural hearing on February 5, 2007, the Subcommittee has had great success in addressing critical topics via both hearings and legislation, and has created avenues for working across party lines. It has brought much needed attention to the legal framework on key issues such as human trafficking, drug enforcement, internet freedom, child prostitution, corporate responsibility, equal treatment for women, sexual violence in conflict, and accountability for genocide and crimes against humanity. It has brought together Senators from both sides of the aisle to achieve concrete results in human rights enforcement. With strong bipartisan support, the Subcommittee has successfully shepherded into law three pieces of legislation —the *Child Soldiers Accountability Act*, the *Genocide Accountability Act*, and the *Human Rights Enforcement Act* — that have further enabled the U.S. government to enforce human rights laws. It conducted effective oversight of agencies on the front lines of domestic implementation of U.S. human rights obligations.

We are grateful for your strong personal commitment to human rights and your leadership in ensuring that the Judiciary Committee takes up these issues at the full Committee and Subcommittee levels. We urge you to continue to support the Subcommittee on Human Rights and the Law so that it may sustain this important work at a time when the United States seeks to reestablish its human rights leadership in the world.

Thank you for your time and attention. We look forward to an ongoing dialogue.

Sincerely,

Amanda Lugg
Director of Advocacy, African Services Committee

Larry Cox
Executive Director, Amnesty International USA

Emily Arnold Fernandez
Executive Director, Asylum Access

Pamela Merchant
Executive Director, Center for Justice & Accountability

Douglas Johnson
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Erol Kekic
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