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2009-07-31 H. Thomas Wells, Jr. ABA Presidential Correspondence

H. Thomas Wells Jr.

University of Alabama School of Law

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CORRESPONDENCE LOG

H. Thomas Wells, Jr.

July 31, 2009

Origin	Correspondence	Date	Revd	Status (All suggested dispositions subject to review by TW)	CCs (Informational copies)
IL	Justice David H. Souter Ltr re the need for a revival of civic education in the United States.	7/15	7/27	<i>OP will draft thank you letter for TW review.</i>	
IL	Anthony J. Mansour Davison, MI Ltr re inability to get information about the Junior Bar Section in the 1960's and the Liberty Bell Award	7/21	7/27	<i>OP will respond.</i>	
IL	Bryan Gowdy Mills Creed & Gowdy Jacksonville, FL Note – thanks for preparing the amicus brief on behalf of the ABA	7/23	7/28	<i>NRN. Forwarded to General Counsel's office.</i>	
fax	Michael E. Getnick, President, NYSBA and email response from Terry Brooks	7/29	7/29	<i>OP will prepare response for CBL.</i>	
IL	Frank N. Yurasko Redington Beach, FL Ltr – a retired 40-year member seeking ABA dues waiver	7/21	7/28	<i>Forwarded to Paula Cleave, Director of Membership, for a possible response.</i>	
AL	William R. Bruce St. Mary's, GA Ltr to HTW and CBL – a 50-year ABA member seeking a nominal or minimal dues plan	7/28	7/30	<i>OP will work with Membership on response.</i>	
IL	Christopher H. Smith Member of Congress, 4th District, NJ Ltr – re HR 3240, beginning the process of refining the way the US addresses international child abduction and denial of access	7/24	7/31	<i>OP acknowledged letter. Forwarded to Tom Susman, Howard Davidson and Jack Hanna as an FYI.</i>	

CORRESPONDENCE LOG

H. Thomas Wells, Jr.

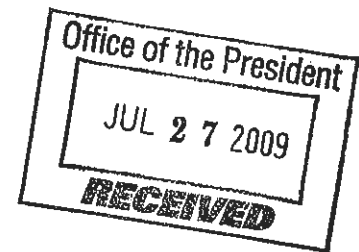
July 31, 2009

Origin	Correspondence	Date	Rcvd	Status (All suggested dispositions subject to review by TW)	CCs (Informational copies)
IL fax	François Serres François SERRES & Associates, Paris Ltr -- enclosed a letter sent to the Minister of Foreign Affairs in Iraq regarding the current events in Ashraf	--	7/31	OP acknowledged letters. Forwarded to Michael Pates, Center for Human Rights, for review.	
IL fax	Additional fax received 8/3, enclosing a motion by the Bar Human Rights Committee of England and Wales	--	8/3	Forwarded to Michael Pates, Center for Human Rights, for review.	

Supreme Court of the United States
Washington, D. C. 20543

CHAMBERS OF
JUSTICE DAVID H. SOUTER

July 15, 2009



Dear Mr. Wells:

This will confirm our understanding that I will plan to be at the meeting on August 1st to speak to the Assembly about the need for a revival of civic education in the United States. As we agreed, I will follow pretty closely what I said at Georgetown a couple of months ago, although my revisions and interpolations will include a call for the ABA to take some systematic and practical action in responding to the need. Our sense of what the ABA ought to undertake, which I understand you will support, is in substance (though not necessarily every detail) the following.

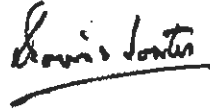
The ABA will establish a committee with an expected lifetime of several years, to take action along these lines:

1. The committee will arrange for appointment of a working group in each of the 50 states to analyze the actual teaching of civic government and American history in each state at this time. In some states (my own being an example), this kind of survey has already been done by groups working on the subject, but in any case, there ought to be a target of about six months from the founding of the group to the completion of the initial survey.
2. The committee itself, with whatever outside help it can get and with the benefit of the state survey results, will devise a statement of minimum standards and objectives for the provision of such civic education in the public schools. I would suppose the target for completing this work ought to be around 12 months from appointment of the committee.
3. The committee will then delegate to each of the state working groups the responsibility to assess existing state practice against the minimum standards and prepare concrete proposals for such reform as may be needed in each of the states to meet the ABA minimums. In some states, this work is already in progress; again, that is true in my own state (and I am even a member of the state working group). I think I can rightly assume that in most states, however, this kind of work is yet to be thought of, let alone begun. The individuals or institutions addressed by these proposals will of course vary from state to state; in some cases it may well be the state legislature, though in most it probably will be a board of education, or state department of education. But submission of these calls for revitalizing the teaching ought to be made within two years of the committee's establishment.
4. Beyond what I've just sketched, it probably would be foolish to plan at this point. The ABA, along with the state bar associations, will know how to push the projects in each state, and I assume that the ABA's good offices will readily be forthcoming to do the pushing.

For reasons you do not need spelled out, and for reasons I touched on when I spoke earlier, I believe civic educational reform in the United States is, literally, essential to the continued vitality of American constitutional government as we know it. Your readiness, and the readiness of others in the ABA, to plunge in promises as important an effort as any of us has ever made for the welfare of the United States.

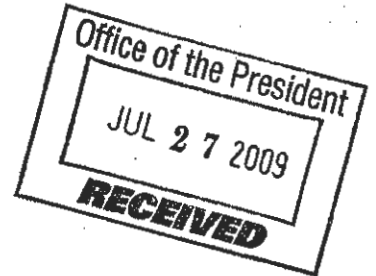
Thank you.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Louis Luntz", with a horizontal line underneath.

H. Thomas Wells, Jr., Esquire
President
American Bar Association
321 North Clark Street
Chicago, Illinois 60654-7598

ANTHONY J. MANSOUR
11489 CARR RD.
DAVISON, MI.
48423-9336



Hon. H. Thomas Wells Jr. President
American Bar Association
Chicago Headquarters:
321 North Clark Street
Chicago, IL 60610

July 21, 2009

Dear President Wells:

I read, with special interest, your message to the membership on page 9 of the July issue of the association magazine. I am sorry to report that my experience with the association has not measured up to the picture you project.

Please refer to the attached correspondence which represents my third effort to get some information. I have not received the courtesy of a reply of any kind. I have seriously considered resigning from the association because of it.

I am not a boastful person but I will tell you something about myself to, hopefully, satisfy you that I am also not just a crackpot. I have been an ABA member continuously for over 50 years in private practice and as a judge of the Circuit Court in Michigan. I am a life member of the American Bar Foundation. While in private practice I carried an A/V rating by Martindale Hubble during most of my active years. I have contributed financially and devoted thousands of hours to bar association activities and have helped make numerous improvements to the practice of law in this area. I have helped many young lawyers get a start by mentoring and providing them with rent-free office space. I have been retired for the last 10 years.

I know I am right but need help proving it. Perhaps you can help me get someone to just say "we have the information you need and you can come and look it over" or, "we do not have those records and stop bothering us". Either way we will put this to rest but I really do not appreciate being just ignored.

Respectfully,

Anthony J. Mansour

Mills Creed & Gowdy
865 May Street
Jacksonville, FL 32204

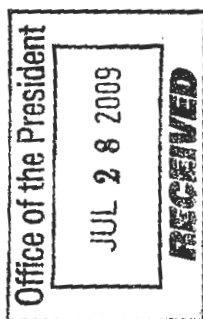
July 23, 2009

Dear Mr. Wells:

Thank you for your efforts in preparing the amicus brief on behalf of the ABA. My client, Terrance Graham, and I are grateful. Please express this gratitude to all those who assisted in preparing the brief.

Sincerely,

Bryce Howley



865 May Street, Jacksonville, FL 32204
904 350 0075 www.appellate-firm.com



NEW YORK STATE BAR ASSOCIATION

One Elk Street, Albany, New York 12207 • 518.463.3200 • www.nysba.org

MICHAEL E. GETNICK
President, New York State Bar Association

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258 Genesee Street, Suite 401
Utica, NY 13502-4642
315/797-9261
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mgetnick@glagplawfirm.com

July 29, 2009

H. Thomas Wells, Jr., President
American Bar Association
321 North Clark Street
Chicago, IL 60654

Dear President Wells:

I am writing to urge that the American Bar Association join with the New York State Bar Association in making a top priority the elimination of a completely unjustified restriction imposed on legal services organizations that accept federal funds from the Legal Services Corporation -- the imposition of restrictions on the use of funds obtained from sources other than the Corporation. We in New York believe that there is an opportunity at this time to overturn a provision that has hampered the ability of these organizations to afford to their clients the same representation that private practitioners can offer.

As you know the Senate Appropriations Committee has proposed eliminating this restriction. This is the first time since the restriction was imposed in 1996 that a serious effort has been made to eliminate it. Clearly, both the House and Senate are looking carefully at all of the restrictions faced by legal services organizations as they carry out their critical missions. The House would lift the current restriction on their receiving attorneys fees under fee shifting statutes. This is important, and the New York State Bar Association fully supports the House proposal. However, the restriction that most hampers these organizations is that which limits the work they can do when receiving funds from non-federal sources.

Whatever can be said for the federal government's efforts to impose conditions on the use of federal funds by organizations receiving such funds, the government's efforts to impose the same restrictions on the use of other funds cannot be justified. Any organization should be able to use non-federal funds in any manner consistent with its mission. In addition, this restriction seriously limits the ability of these organizations to represent their clients. In New York, legal services organizations receive about two-thirds of their funding from sources other than the Legal Services Corporation. Thus, eliminating this restriction would free well over half of their funds and allow them to bring actions that are critical, especially in this time of extraordinary need due to the economic downturn.

The New York State Bar Association has been actively engaged in efforts to support expanding legal services available to the needy. We have been speaking on an ongoing basis with members of our State's Congressional delegation, urging both greater funding and elimination of all of the restrictions imposed on Legal Services Corporation grantees. With the actions of the Senate Appropriations Committee, we intend to focus in the upcoming weeks on eliminating the restriction on non-federal funds. I urge the American Bar Association to join with us so that there is a national effort to achieve this goal. I think that, working together, we have a good chance of success in this most important effort in the current Congress.

Sincerely,



Michael E. Getnick

c: Carolyn B. Lamm, Esq., President-Elect

Mastronardi, Kay

From: Pilchen, Ira
Sent: Wednesday, July 29, 2009 2:44 PM
To: Mastronardi, Kay; Curd, Beverly
Subject: FW: New York State Bar Association letter
Attachments: NYSBA-Getnick ltr.pdf

Please log the letter from NYSBA and Terry's email. We'll figure out how to handle after Annual. Thanks.

Ira

From: Brooks, Terry
Sent: Wednesday, July 29, 2009 2:37 PM
To: Pilchen, Ira; 'Tommy Wells'; 'Lamm, Carolyn'; Strandlie, Julie; Susman, Thomas; Camillucci, Karl; Lucianek, Roseanne
Cc: Hankinson, Deborah (dhankinson@hanklev.com); Robert Stein; Livingston, Lora
Subject: RE: New York State Bar Association letter

Thank you for forwarding this. I am copying the Chair (Deborah Hankinson) and Incoming Chair (Robert Stein) of the Standing Committee on Legal Aid, and the chair of the SCLAID Subcommittee on LSC Restrictions (Lora Livingston). After a great deal of discussion with GAO over the course of the past year or so, ABA has strongly supported elimination of this restriction. We have ABA policy on this point from 1996. Julie Strandlie has worked closely with the leadership to craft ABA letters to Congressional leaders and other lobbying documents supporting this position. I believe that ABA is already fully aboard with the view espoused by the NYSBA, and has communicated that to bar associations, Congress and others.

Terry Brooks, SCLAID Counsel
 Office: 312-988-5747
 Cell: 312-799-0498

From: Pilchen, Ira
Sent: Wednesday, July 29, 2009 2:29 PM
To: Tommy Wells; Lamm, Carolyn; Strandlie, Julie; Susman, Thomas; Brooks, Terry; Camillucci, Karl; Lucianek, Roseanne
Subject: New York State Bar Association letter

Tommy received the attached letter today, by fax, from Michael Getnick, president of the New York State Bar Association. He urges "... that the American Bar Association join with the New York State Bar Association in making a top priority the elimination of a completely unjustified restriction imposed on legal services organizations that accept federal funds from the Legal Services Corporation--the imposition of restrictions on the use of funds obtained from sources other than the Corporation...."

Ira

Ira Pilchen
 Special Assistant to President H. Thomas Wells Jr.
 Office of the President
 American Bar Association
 321 N. Clark St., 21st Floor
 Chicago, IL 60654
 Phone: 312-988-6044 Fax: 312-988-5100
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7/30/2009

Frank N. Yurasko
Attorney at Law
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Member N.J. and Fla. Bar

H. Thomas Wells, Jr., President
American Bar Association Service Center
321 North Clark Street
Chicago IL 60610

July 21, 2009

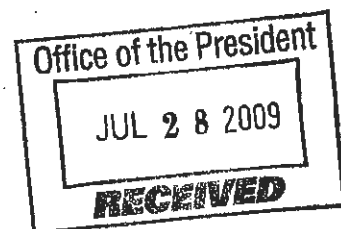
Dear President Wells:

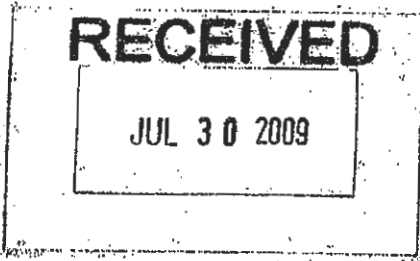
I have been a member of the ABA for approximately 40 years, am almost 71 years of age and retired from practice four years ago. I am writing to bring to your attention what I consider to be an unfair and unjust policy regarding Bar membership and payment of dues. When I reached the age of 65 the New Jersey Bar Association waived any future dues and considered me as an honorary member. Over the past few years the ABA has utilized the same birth year (not age) to determine the applicability of a fee waiver. So whereas I had looked forward to a dues waiver commencing at age 70 as it has applied for some past members, I find that your retention of a 1936 birth date makes it impossible for me to obtain the benefit of a full dues waiver. Accordingly with regret I herewith tender my resignation from your Association.

Yours truly,



Frank N. Yurasko
Member # 00941283





William R. Bruce
304 Charleston Way
St. Marys, GA 31558-1935
(912) 576-4482
Fax: (615) 687-1531
E-Mail: bill.bruce@arlaw.com

July 28, 2009

✓ H. Thomas Wells, Jr., Esq.
President, American Bar Association
Maynard, Cooper & Gale, PC
2400 Regions/Harbert Plaza
901 Sixth Avenue North
Birmingham, AL 35203

Carloyn B. Lamm, Esq.
President-Elect, American Bar Association
White & Case LLP
701 13th Street NW, #800
Washington, DC 20005-3925

Dear Mr. Wells and Ms Lamm:

I am writing to you as a long time and proud member of the American Bar Association regarding a matter of ABA policy.

My first employment as a new lawyer in 1959 was with the Memphis, Tennessee, firm of Shep Tate, who later became ABA President, and one of my first projects in 1959 and 1960 was to solicit new members for the ABA. Since then, I have maintained my ABA membership continuously, have attended ABA meetings and a convention, and am proud to be a Fellow of the American Bar Foundation. Also, I was on the original Governing Committee of the ABA's Forum on Affordable Housing and Community Development Law.

Now, I am retired, although I still maintain a relationship with my Nashville, Tennessee, law firm (Adams and Reese LLP, which coincidentally also has offices in both Birmingham and Washington). I would like to continue my ABA affiliation on a nominal- or minimal-dues basis but am unwilling to continue paying full dues. I have communicated at length with Ms. Rebecca Gray Smith of the ABA's Membership Communications office. She has been extremely helpful, courteous, and responsive but advises me that the only way to receive a dues reduction is by executing a "Financial Hardship" application certifying that I am "experiencing financial difficulties" or am "unemployed," having "lost [my] job in the last 12 months". These conditions do not fit me, and I am not comfortable making either of these certifications. Accordingly, I tentatively have determined to terminate my ABA membership as of September 1, 2009 (the 50-year anniversary of both my law license and my ABA membership).

I respectfully suggest that the ABA would be well served to have a policy accommodating and recognizing long time, loyal members (such is the case with many state and local bar associations, including the Tennessee, Nashville, and Memphis associations in which I maintain membership and involvement).

Thank you for your great efforts in behalf of our legal system.

Sincerely,


William R. Bruce

cc: S. Shepherd Tate, Esq., Martin, Tate, Morrow & Marston, P.C., Memphis, TN (via e-mail)
Ms. Rebecca Gray Smith, ABA Membership Communications, Chicago, IL (via e-mail)

CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH
4TH DISTRICT, NEW JERSEY

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Hamilton, NJ 08619-3828
(609) 585-7878
TTY (609) 585-3650

108 Lacey Road, Suite 38A
Whiting, NJ 08759-1331
(732) 350-2300

2373 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515-3004
(202) 225-3765

<http://chrissmith.house.gov>



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House of Representatives

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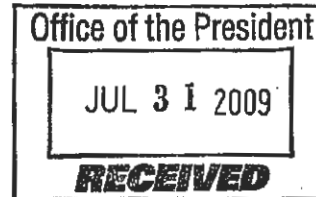
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COOPERATION IN EUROPE
RANKING MEMBER

CONGRESSIONAL-EXECUTIVE
COMMISSION ON CHINA
RANKING MEMBER

DEAN, NEW JERSEY DELEGATION

July 24, 2009

President H. Thomas Wells, Jr.
American Bar Association
321 N. Clarke St.
Chicago, IL 60654-4746



Dear Mr. Wells,

Over the last six months, I have heard from left behind parents from all over the country. They tell me that our current system of addressing international child abduction is not functioning as it should be and that it is not meeting the needs of left behind parents and their families.

In response to their concerns and suggestions and after much study and review, I introduced H.R. 3240 on July 16th—beginning the process of refining the way the United States addresses international child abduction and denial of access.

H.R. 3240 will, for the first time, establish a system of evaluation and accountability for countries that have not signed the Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction (Hague Convention). Countries that are non-signatory and countries with which the U.S. has memorandum of understanding will each be evaluated, along with Hague Countries, on their cooperation in the resolution of child abduction and denial of access cases.

The new evaluation and accountability system created by H.R. 3240 will encourage countries to prioritize resolution of abduction and denial of access cases. The evaluation published in an annual report will also provide a valuable tool for U.S. judges making travel determinations for children currently in the United States—preventing judges from unwittingly allowing children to travel to countries from which we have little hope of return (e.g. countries that are technically Hague countries but with which we have no real reciprocity).

In addition, H.R. 3240 underscores the seriousness and injustice of international child abduction and denial of access by empowering the President to take direct action against Hague and non-Hague countries found to demonstrate patterns of non-cooperation. H.R. 3240 delineates eighteen direct responses ranging in severity from private demarche to economic sanction.

The delineation of such presidential actions in human rights legislation is not without precedent. In fact, the actions listed in H.R. 3240 are identical to the presidential actions enacted

in the International Religious Freedom Action of 1998 (with an addition of the statement of non-reciprocity under the Hague Convention). The presidential actions will make clear to the non-cooperating country the gravity with which the United States perceives non-cooperation and will hasten reform in the non-cooperating country.

It is also important to note that H.R. 3240 appoints an Ambassador at Large for International Child Abduction to advise the Secretary of State as well as creates an expanded office to more pro-actively handle the 1,900 ongoing child abduction cases (involving approximately 2,800 children) and 425 incoming cases (involving about 600 children). I have heard from many distraught and frustrated left behind parents who simply cannot get the information they need or are faced with unreasonable wait times for action in our current system. H.R. 3240 makes the child abduction office more parent-friendly and accessible. The provisions will help ensure better service to parents as well as greater access to information needed by the policy and legal communities.

I appreciate this opportunity to share the text of H.R. 3240 and goals behind the legislation. I request your review, insights, and support as we work to advance—and perhaps amend—H.R. 3240. The international child abduction caseload in the United States has increased 60% over the last three years. It is critical that we act to improve the system, as well as to emphasize that child abduction and denial of access will not be without penalty.

I have asked Allison Hollabaugh, my Foreign Affairs Counsel, to follow-up with you and identify the individuals within the ABA with responsibility related to international child abduction. In the interim, if you have any questions, please feel free to call me or Ms. Hollabaugh at (202) 225-3765.

Thank you in advance for your assistance.

Sincerely,



Christopher H. Smith
Member of Congress



cc: President-elect Carolyn Lamm
Enc: H.R. 3240.

François SERRES & Associates

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75116 PARIS

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President, American Bar Association

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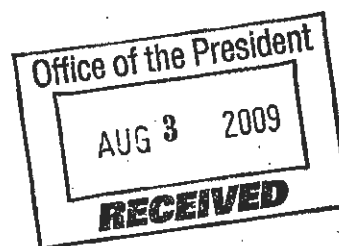
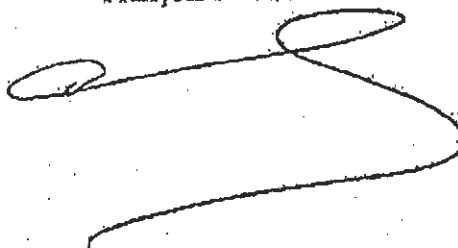
Dear President,

Following the letter that I sent you, please find attached a motion taken by the Bar Human Rights Committee of England and Wales.

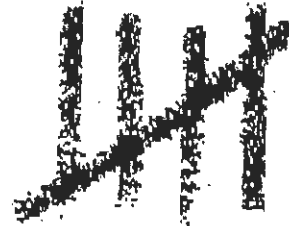
It would be very appreciative if your organisation could take the same kind of motion.

Respectfully,

François SERRES



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: THURSDAY 29 AUGUST 2009



BAR HUMAN RIGHTS
COMMITTEE OF
ENGLAND AND WALES

STATEMENT BY THE BAR HUMAN RIGHTS COMMITTEE OF ENGLAND AND WALES

The Bar Human Rights Committee of England and Wales express their deep concern at alleged reports of attacks by Iraqi forces on unarmed residents of Camp Ashraf on Tuesday 28 July 2009, which left several people killed and hundreds injured.

According to reports, hundreds of armed Iraqi security forces stormed the camp in Iraq's Ditala province, north of Baghdad, at around 3pm local time. Video footage released by local residents of the camp show Iraqi forces using tear gas, water canons and batons against unarmed Iranian residents who tried to stop them from entering the camp.

Camp Ashraf is home to some 3,500 people, who are members or supporters of the People's Mojahedeen Organization of Iran (PMOI), an Iranian opposition group whose members have been resident in Iraq for many years. The PMOI is considered a "terrorist" group by the US and Iran, however it was removed from a European Union terrorist list earlier this year after a legal battle on the grounds that the PMOI no longer advocates or engages in armed opposition to the government of Iran.

The camp was disarmed by US forces following the US-led invasion of Iraq in 2003. The US forces provided protection for the camp and its residents, who were designated as "protected persons" under the Fourth Geneva Convention following the 2003 invasion of Iraq, but this situation was discontinued following the Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) between the US and Iraqi governments, although the SOFA makes no reference to Camp Ashraf or its residents. Iraqi forces took over its security from the US earlier this year.

In the last few months the Iraqi government has publicly stated that it wants to take over full control of Camp Ashraf, and have repeatedly vowed to close the camp. Residents of Camp Ashraf have reportedly stated that they are terrified of being handed over to Iranian authorities.

The Bar Human Rights Committee calls on the Iraqi government to have due regard to the Geneva Conventions, notably Article 27 of the Fourth Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, which provides that all civilians be treated humanely. The Iraqi government should fully and impartially investigate the apparent excessive use of force by Iraqi security forces. It should also reveal the whereabouts of any people allegedly detained and ensure that they are protected from torture or other ill-treatment. The Bar Human Rights Committee also reminds the Iraqi authorities of its obligation to refrain from forcibly displacing, deporting, expelling or repatriating them in violation of the principle of non-refoulement as enshrined in the 1951 Geneva Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and the 1967 Protocol thereto.

-----END-----

The Bar Human Rights Committee of England and Wales is the international human rights arm of the Bar of England and Wales. It is an independent body concerned with defending the rule of law and internationally recognised legal standards relating to human rights and the right to a fair trial.

For more information please contact BHRC in London, UK, on email: bhrc@compuserve.com

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Jeremy Harris
Legal Consultant

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Fax: 00 312 988 5100

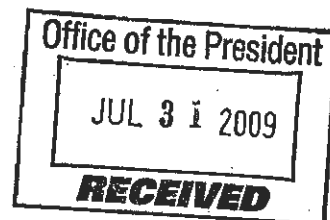
Dear President,

Please find here enclosed a letter that have been sent to the Minister of foreign affairs in Iraq in relation with the current events in Ashraf.

Our team of lawyers would appreciate some support from your organisation; notably if you could intervene before the Iraqi authorities to facilitate access to our client.

Respectfully,

François SERRES



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KENNETH LEWIS, President, Lawyers Without Borders - Sweden

SWITZERLAND

DR MARC HENZELIN, LL.M.

THE UNITED KINGDOM

THE RT. HON.

THE LORD WADDINGTON, CVO DL QC, Former Home Secretary under Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher

THE RT. HON. THORNTON BARON BARNWELL, QC, Former UK Solicitor General

LORD TAVERNE, QC

SIR GEOFFREY HINMAN, Consultant, Al Wajidi & Partners

PROF. BILL BOWRING, Barrister, Professor of Law, School of Law, Birmingham City University of Birmingham

MARTIN LINDGREEN, Barrister, Human Rights Committee of the Law Society, former President, Birmingham Law Society, former Chair, Criminal Law Committee of the Law Society of England & Wales

STEPHEN GROSZ, Head of Public Law and Human Rights Department, Brindman & Partners

THE UNITED STATES

DR. ALLAN GERSON, former Deputy Assistant Attorney General for Legal Counsel, the U.S. Department of Justice, former Chief Counsel, US Delegation to United Nations

STEVEN M. SCHNEEBALIM, Professor of Lecturer in International Law, School of International Studies, Johns Hopkins University

International Committee of Jurists in Defence of Ashraf

His Excellency Hushyar Zebani
Minister of Foreign Affairs
Republic of Iraq
Baghdad
Iraq

Thursday, 30 July 2009

Dear Foreign Minister,

I am writing to you as the Executive Director of the International Committee of Jurists in Defence of Ashraf (ICJDA), and as a lawyer from the Paris Bar acting on behalf of many of Ashraf residents. As you are aware our Committee has been supported by 8,500 lawyers across Europe and North America.

Considering the recent events which occurred in Ashraf, in the last few days, I and my other colleagues from the Committee, including Professor Eric David, Honourary President of the ICJDA and President of the International Law Centre in Brussels, Marc Henzelin from the Swiss Bar, Paulo Sodani, an Italian lawyer from Rome, Mr. Bernd Heuzler, a Lawyer from Berlin in Germany, Kenneth Lewis, a Swedish attorney from Stockholm, Gilles Parvélle, another French lawyer from the Val d'Oise Bar, David Kilgour from Canada, would like to meet with our clients in Ashraf. We expect more lawyers, representing residents of Ashraf, to also join us in our demand to meet with our clients.

We are deeply outraged and shocked by the recent unjustified raid on Ashraf by the Iraqi police forces. We are concerned about the safety of our clients which has been seriously jeopardised by the raid.

Access to our clients which has been denied for some time by the Iraqi authorities, is the basic fundamental rights recognized by all international conventions. I am sure that the Iraqi government would also recognize these rights, and I would therefore appreciate if you could facilitate and authorize a mission of our colleagues, including myself, to visit our clients in Ashraf as rapidly as possible.

Would you also please give all the necessary instructions to your Embassies particularly in the above mentioned countries, in which these lawyers reside, to grant entry visa to the lawyers as well as permission to enter Camp Ashraf.

Taking into account the extreme urgency of our tasks, could you please provide a prompt response to our request.

Respectfully,


François SERRES

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