

March 24, 2003

Secretary-General Kofi Annan
United Nations
New York, NY 10017
Fax: 212-963-4879

Dear Secretary-General Annan:

The American Center for Law and Justice (ACLJ) is an international public interest organization with over 500,000 members and offices in Washington, D.C. and Strasbourg, France. The ACLJ is dedicated to the concept that freedom and democracy must be protected both domestically and internationally.

In light of the recent extremely disturbing reports from Iraq dealing with the treatment of American prisoners of war in Iraqi hands, we demand that your office and the Security Council take immediate action to notify Iraqi officials that they are acting in violation of the Geneva Convention, specifically Articles 13, 14, and 17 concerning the treatment of prisoners of war. Pursuant to Article 12 of the Convention, the Iraqi Government, as the enemy power, bears the ultimate responsibility for prisoners of war, regardless of the unit which captures them. Article 13 requires that prisoners of war must be protected against acts of violence or intimidation and against insults and public curiosity. In addition, Article 14 requires that prisoners of war be treated with respect concerning their persons and honor. Iraqi Vice President Taha Yassin Ramadan has acted in a manner which expressly violates the Convention regarding the treatment of prisoners of war by showing the prisoners on television while being interrogated.

The United Nations Secretary General and Security Council must put the Iraqi Regime on clear notice that officials violating the Geneva Convention will be sought out and prosecuted as war criminals. We believe it is absolutely critical that the United Nations Security Council act on this issue demanding the Iraqi Regime respect settled international law regarding the humane treatment of prisoners of war. Thank you for your prompt attention to this most important matter.

Sincerely,

Jay Alan Sekulow
Chief Counsel