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One Hundred and Thirteenth Congress

Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission

January 14, 2013

Prime Minister Al-Maliki
c/o Embassy of the Republic of Iraq
3421 Massachusetts Ave., N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20007

Dear Prime Minister Al-Maliki:

We write to express our grave concerns about the situation of minorities in Iraq. Since 2003, ethnic and religious minorities have been victimized both by general lawlessness as well as discrimination and violence that specifically target these communities. Religious and ethnic minorities lack the protection of the major sectarian power structures in Iraq. Minorities suffer from targeted violence, efforts at forced conversions, incitement to sectarian violence against them, kidnapping and discriminatory laws and practices amid a general climate of impunity for crimes against these vulnerable communities.

We urge the government of Iraq to recognize the challenges facing minorities in Iraq, including Christians and Sabian Mandaean. The Iraqi government should implement a mechanism for minorities to voice their concerns, suggest solutions and follow up with results. One such mechanism might be a "Minorities Security Council" which could work under your direct supervision to follow up on incidents of violence and bring accountability to the police and military forces responsible for the security of all citizens of Iraq.

Such a council should only be the beginning of the government's efforts to guarantee that religious minorities have the freedom and security to practice their faith without fear. Security measures can only succeed when the law enforcement and judicial systems end the growing climate of impunity for crimes against minorities. In addition, the government should treat incitement to violence as a very serious issue and hold accountable those who preach hatred towards others.

The failure of the Iraqi government to provide security especially for minorities has resulted in a significant wave of refugees. We urge you to continue fulfilling your responsibility to your citizens even after they have left Iraq. We applaud the \$10 million in aid that Iraq provided to Jordan in 2007 and hope that future aid efforts will empower

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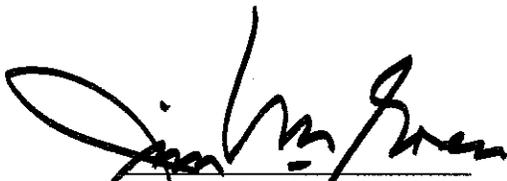
JANICE KAGUYUTAN
Democratic Staff Director

international and non-governmental organizations to directly meet the needs of Iraqi refugees in the region.

We recognize the steps that the government has taken to increase security and preserve order, especially for these vulnerable communities, and urge you to continue your efforts to restore trust in the government. Protecting and preserving the rights of all Iraqi citizens, including Christians, Sabian Mandaeans and other religious and ethnic minorities, is necessary to achieving long-term peace and democracy in Iraq.

The U.S. Congress and the international community are very concerned by the conditions of minorities in Iraq. We will continue to follow this issue closely and urge your serious consideration of these concerns and requests.

Sincerely,



James P. McGovern
Member of Congress
Co-Chair, TLHRC



Frank R. Wolf
Member of Congress
Co-Chair, TLHRC