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UN Secretary General

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REGARDING HUMAN RIGHTS AND DRUG POLICY; AN OPEN LETTER ON BEHALF OF THE WORLD'S DRUG USERS AND HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS.

Dear Sir.

I write to inform you of a legal matter that requires your immediate attention.

To make a long story short, there is increasing evidence to suggest that our current drug policies are incompatible with the International Bill of Human Rights. As you know full well, the purpose of this Bill is to protect the individual against disproportionate, arbitrary and discriminatory infringements on his freedoms. It therefore defines certain criteria which all laws must satisfy in order to be legitimate, but when it comes to our drug laws there is a lot to suggest that they fall short compared to these.

The question of our drug policies' relationship to human rights law, however, has never been considered, for when these policies came into being the situation pertaining to the illicit drugs was manifestly different, and we didn't know enough about drugs or the consequences of prohibition to put two and two together and challenge the law from this perspective.

Now, half a century later, we know better. We have learned that whether we are talking about licit or illicit drugs, there are the same supply and demand mechanisms in effect and the same varying patterns of use, and we have learned that, when all is said and done, alcohol and tobacco have proven to be the worst of all drugs for society and users alike. Not only that, but we have also discovered that the degree of criminalization has little to no influence on the user population; that the evils generated by prohibition (organized crime, corruption, violence, disease, deaths by overdose, etc.) are worse than the evils caused by the drugs themselves; and that a health-oriented approach, like the one we have for alcohol, is a much more sensible solution to the drug problem.

In other words, as we have wised up, we have learned that the idea of prohibition is built on a series of faulty premises, prejudices that can be traced back to a massively overblown enemy image and the moral panic that follows. And when we take into account that (1) the separation between licit and illicit drugs is nonsensical and (2) that less invasive—and more prudent—means than the law-and-order approach is available, we also have a sound basis for arguing that today's policies are incompatible with key human rights standards and principles, such as those of equality and proportionality.

After all, the former protects us against discriminatory practices while the latter defines certain criteria that laws must comply with in order to be compatible with our catalogue of rights. And considering that a fundamental premise of our Bill of Rights is that to the extent the State is allowed to limit our freedoms, it must be because "just requirements of morality, public order and the general welfare in a democratic society" necessitate it; considering that the burden of justification in such a case lies with the State party to show that a certain limitation satisfies the tests of legality, necessity, reasonableness and legitimate purpose; and considering that this, among other things, means that for the drug law to be in compliance with human rights law it must (1) be suitable to achieve the desired end (which is a drug-free world), (2) its interference must be proportionate to the identified aim, and (3) it must strike a fair balance between the rights of the individual and the interests of the community, there is a lot to suggest that the State party will fail in this endeavor.

The law, after all, must be no more repressive or severe than absolutely necessary for the general welfare, and as virtually all experts on drug policy agree that (1) drug prohibition can never achieve its goal of a drug free world; (2) that there are less invasive means available, more fit to minimize the harms caused by drug use; and (3) that the harms associated with prohibition outweigh the harms caused by drug use itself, it seems clear that drug prohibition is incompatible with the proportionality principle.

Now, I do not expect you to immediately see the greater picture and the full extent to which our drug policies violate human rights law. For nearly hundred years, the idea of prohibition as a decent and sensible solution to the drug problem has been allowed to wreak havoc on the world, and growing up in a society where we are formed in the image of prohibition, it takes some effort before we are able to see through the confused reasoning that more often than not cloud our thinking.

It is therefore less important whether or not this introduction to the essence of the rights-oriented debate is able you convince you of its merits. What is important is that drug reform activists and human rights defenders for some time now have made an effort to bring the rights-oriented debate to the attention of our civil servants; that they have provided them with compelling evidence and detailed legal reasoning supporting their allegations; and that our officials, in turn, have refused to discuss the matter. Not only that, but when we have sought to have the issue properly reviewed, they have systematically frustrated de jure and de facto our right to a fair and public hearing by a competent, independent and impartial tribunal established by law. In doing so they have violated their oath of office and their obligations to the International Bill of Human Rights, and because of the prohibitionists' denial of reality and their refusal to abide by their duties to international law, we are

now in the unfortunate situation where some 300 million drug users are denied the protection of human rights.

This is what is important. You see, not only have public officials at the national and European level sabotaged our efforts to have our rights determined by an independent, impartial and competent tribunal; even the UN Human Rights Committee has denied us this right, and so the credibility of your entire organization now depends on whether or not you have the integrity to undo this blatant miscarriage of justice.

This may be harsh words, but for too long have the prohibitionists shied away from any reality check. The Human Rights Committee's decision to deny us the protection of human rights law was in fact no more than a predictable culmination of several decade's worth of reality renunciation, for looking back at the past 50 years, we find an institutionalized refusal to come to terms with what has been called "the most destructive public policy since the Nazis and their final solution".

It is, of course, impossible here to enumerate the many ways by which the drug laws have violated our catalogue of rights; the destructive function and consequences they have had for society; and the degree to which prohibitionists have closed their eyes to the parade of horrors that has followed in their wake, but to provide you with a more comprehensive understanding of the factual picture, you hereby receive the following documentation:

- Appendix 1: December 21, 2012 communication to the UN Human Rights Committee.
- Appendix 2: October 1, 2014 communication to the UN Human Rights Committee.
- Appendix 3: November 5, 2014 communication to the UN Human Rights Committee.
- Appendix 4: The book *Reason Is*.

As you can see from these appendices¹, our claims are neither unsubstantiated nor the data insufficient. In fact, having seen this documentation, what is most striking is the extent to which prohibitionists have gone out of their way to deny reality. While the defenders of the status quo predictably will disagree, the evidence in fact proves that it is so, and the prohibitionists need to come around quickly if they are to avoid liability for the consequences of their failed policy. Appendix 2 elaborates further on this issue, and Kofi Annan, your former Secretary General, and Louise Arbour, your former High Commissioner for Human Rights, commented thus on policymakers' denial of reality and the consequences of their negligence:

"It might have been understandable that the architects of the system would place faith in the concept of eradicating drug production and use (in the light of the limited evidence available at the time). There is no excuse, however, for ignoring the evidence and experience accumulated since then. . . . There is a temptation to avoid the issue. This is an abdication of policy responsibility—for every year we continue with the current

¹ Every single claim made in this communication is further elaborated on and documented with source references in the appendices.

*approach, billions of dollars are wasted on ineffective programs, millions of citizens are sent to prison unnecessarily, millions more suffer from the drug dependence of loved ones who cannot access health and social care services, and hundreds of thousands of people die from preventable overdoses and diseases contracted through unsafe drug use*².

Now, this little summarization can only scratch the surface. However, further proof of our leaders' criminal negligence is everywhere to be found, and a European panel of experts concluded thus after reviewing the status quo:

*"Despite the primacy of human rights obligations under the UN Charter, the approach of the UN system and the international community to addressing the tensions between drug control and human rights remains marked by an ambiguity that is inexcusable in the face of the egregious human rights abuses perpetrated in the course of enforcing drug prohibition. . . . It is past time for UN, its individual Members, and its organs, as well as civil society organizations, to ensure that the international drug control system works to respect, protect and fulfill the human rights of people who use drugs and affected communities, and to hold the international drug control entities and UN Members to account for human rights abuses committed in the name of drug control."*³

This was six years ago. Since then many more billions of dollars have been wasted on counterproductive policies, more than 10 million people have been wrongfully imprisoned, and more than a million have died as a direct consequence of the war on drugs. Two years after the European Coalition for Just and Effective Drug Policies, in a statement to the General Assembly, declared that the harmful "effects of prohibition can no longer be called unintended", we are still waiting for our leaders to honor their obligations to international law; 16 years after 770 scholars—including more than a hundred judges and professors of law—wrote to the UN Secretary General, complaining about human rights violations in the name of the war on drugs, stating that is causing more harm than drug abuse itself and asking the UN to initiate a truly open and honest dialogue regarding the future of global drug control policies, we are still waiting for it to manifest. *We are still waiting for the day when our officials shall recognize our right to have the relationship between the drug control and the human rights conventions properly reviewed—and the longer it takes before this is done, the graver the implications of their negligence will it be.*

In fact, it was as a result of this situational picture that the UN Human Rights Committee finally received a complaint and was asked to review the legality of our drug laws. The Committee, however, instead of acting on its obligations to the Covenant, chose to ignore the documentation it received, and now that the UN human rights apparatus itself has proven to be a part of the problem,

² *The quote is taken from a report prepared together with other members of the Global Commission on Drug Policy. For more, see the Global Commission on Drug Policy's June 2011 report, p. 5, 17.*

³ *Barret et al., Recalibrating the Regime: The Need for a Human Rights-Based Approach to International Drug Policy, Beckley Foundation (2008), pp. 1-2.*

we are in a state of affairs where the Bill of Rights is rendered null and void and the system of rights and protections effectively meaningless.

Again, this may be harsh words, but to elaborate we are now in a situation where the UN human rights apparatus undertakes to respect and ensure to all individuals—except the drug law violators—the rights recognised in the Bill of Rights; where all persons, except them, shall be equal before the law and be entitled to equal protection of the law; where everybody, except them, shall be recognised as a person before the Courts and entitled to a fair hearing by a competent, impartial and independent tribunal to have their rights determined; where everybody, except them, shall have an effective remedy against unlawful/arbitrary detention as well as abusive, discriminatory and degrading policies; and where everyone, except them, shall have an enforceable right to compensation after being the victim of such practices.

We live in a society, in which everybody, except the drug law violators, shall have the right to self-determination and to freely pursue their social, cultural, economic and spiritual development; where every human being, except them, shall have the inherent right to life and to be protected from being arbitrarily deprived of it; where no one, except them, shall be subjected to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment; where no one, but them, shall be subjected to arbitrary and unlawful interference with his privacy, family, home or correspondence; and where everyone, but them, have the right to be protected by law against such interferences.

We are supposed to accept a social contract where everyone, except them, shall have the right to liberty and security of person and where no one, but them, shall be unlawfully deprived of their liberty; where everyone, but them, shall have the right to freedom of expression and to seek, collect, and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers; where any propaganda for war—except drug war—shall be prohibited by law; where any advocacy of hatred that constitutes incitement to discrimination, hostility or violence shall be prohibited by law—except that which is directed against the drug law violators; and where any family, except theirs, are entitled to protection by society and the state.

Needless to say, the longer this travesty of justice is allowed to continue, the more shameful the disgrace of your office will be. And while I do not expect you to immediately come to grips with the ramifications of these serious allegations, you have an important task in ensuring that the question of our drug policies' alleged incompatibility with human rights law is properly reviewed.

In this regard your duties to the world community are twofold. For one, the General Assembly shall have a special session on drugs in 2016, and it is imperative that the rights-oriented debate then gets the attention it deserves. As you may know, this special session was brought about as a result of pressure from Latin American countries. The OAS estimates that some 150,000 people die in the region each year because of prohibition, and as their problems with prohibition are a lot worse than their problems with drug use, responsible government leaders have called for a review of current policies. As drug policy experts around the world agree that the current classification system makes no sense and that the fundamental assumptions behind the law-and-order approach have been disproved after 50 years of a global war on drugs, there is also increasing pressure for reform from other countries and NGOs. Uruguay and several U.S. States have already legalized marijuana, and as

the prohibitionists claim that this is a breach of their obligations to the UN drug control conventions, the time has now come for an open debate on the issue and to investigate whether such regimes really violate the drug conventions—or if, on the other hand, the drug conventions violate the human rights conventions.

This is the great question. This is the issue that must be resolved if our Bill of Rights shall guide us towards the future; this is the issue that must be determined if we shall have a world governed by the rule of law; this is the issue that must be clarified if we shall ever have evidence-based drug policies; this is the issue that must be brought to light if the world's 200-300 million drug users shall have their catalogue of rights determined—and if this concern is not properly addressed, then the sorry state of world affairs will be plain for all to see.

To further specify the essence of the rights-oriented debate, there are four questions that must be answered to the satisfaction of an impartial, independent and competent tribunal in order for drug prohibition to be found compatible with our Bill of Rights. Provided that world leaders recognize the rights-oriented debate, these questions are basically the same, and can, using cannabis as an example, be stated like this:

- Whereas all comparisons of the problems associated with cannabis and legal drugs like alcohol and tobacco demonstrate that the legal ones are more harmful to users' health and more destructive to us as a society: *How will you defend present policies? How can you, without building your drug policy on a discriminatory practice—and thus violate the principle of equality—argue in favor of a health-oriented approach toward alcohol users and a continued criminalization of cannabis users?*
- Whereas there is the same supply and demand factors involved when it comes to cannabis and other drugs like alcohol and tobacco, and whereas the different groups of drugs also have the same varying patterns of use associated with them: *How will you justify the persecution and the demonization of the drug law violators? What sort of crimes against his fellowmen has a cannabis producer, transporter or seller committed that an alcohol producer, transporter or seller has not?*
- Whereas virtually all of the world's leading drug policy scholars are in agreement that the drug laws have had worse consequences for society in general and users in particular than the drug use itself would have had, and whereas more and more organizations and commissions publish reports that confirm the same: *How will you, from the growing evidence base that suggests the cure (cannabis prohibition) is worse than the disease (cannabis use) defend current policies as measured against the principle of proportionality?*
- Whereas a majority of drug policy experts agree that there was a moral panic behind the outlawing of cannabis; whereas drug policy experts acknowledge that its current classification makes no sense; whereas scholarly works such as James Ostrowski's *Answering the Critics of Drug Legalization*, Douglas Husak's *Drugs and Rights*, and David A.J. Richards' *Sex, Drugs, Death, and the Law* have thoroughly refuted the traditional arguments in favor of

criminalization; whereas an independent, impartial, and competent tribunal (the Cannabis-tribunal in the Hague, 2008) has already qualified the prohibitionist argument as “based on fallacies” and “absolutely worthless”, and whereas the drug laws thus seem to build their credibility on a series of faulty premises: Considering the fact that the enemy image of cannabis has proven vastly exaggerated; considering that the separation between the licit and illicit substances has proven an arbitrary divide; considering that the evidence is increasingly clear that the drug laws have failed in reducing their supply and demand; considering that American, as well as European decriminalization experiments have shown a health-oriented approach to be more successful in dealing with the harms caused by drug use; considering that the cure has proven worse than the disease to the degree that the harms caused by prohibition now have become so enormous that they threaten to undermine the very fabric of our society; considering that paternalistic and moralistic arguments have failed, and considering that you can no longer justify prohibition on the basis that (1) it suppresses different types of crime, (2) that it protects our youth and the wellbeing of society, (3) that drug abuse has substantial economic and social costs, (4) that cannabis use is intrinsically immoral and degrading in nature, (5) that its use is self-destructive, dangerous and may cause a variety of harms, including physical injury, addiction and death, (6) that it is a gateway drug, (7) that its use is not a victimless crime since it causes harm to others, and (8) that we do not know the consequences of legalization: *All this considered, what compelling reasons can there be for prohibition, and in what way are its means tailored towards its explicitly stated ends?*

I chose cannabis as an example because, as you can see from the appendices, the evidence that speaks in its favor is so compelling. Provided therefore that the prohibitionists cannot answer these questions—and provided that they recognize that the Bill of Rights protects *all people* against arbitrary, disproportionate, and discriminatory interferences, and that the same test of reason that all other laws must conform to also applies to the drug laws—one can safely conclude that current policies represent a grave violation of our catalogue of rights.

For a prohibitionist there is no way out of this predicament. In order to justify the status quo, he must succeed in convincing an independent, impartial, and competent tribunal of one or the other—and if our most obstinate prohibitionist officials, sensing they cannot successfully refute these questions, should endeavor to deny the merits of the rights-oriented debate all together, then they must invalidate this chain of reasoning and answer the following question:

- Whereas the fundamental principle from which our system of law follows is that the individual is to have as much freedom, responsibility, and self-determination as absolutely possible (that is, as compatible with a similar right and freedom of others); whereas to whatever degree our rights and freedoms shall be restricted weighty societal considerations must necessitate such actions (that is, they must be required for the protection of the general welfare and the purpose of securing due recognition and respect for the rights and freedoms of others); whereas the purpose of human rights law is to see to it that this is so and to protect the individual from undue, unjust, and arbitrary interferences; whereas at the

core of the International Bill of Human Rights we therefore find certain legal principles, principles that are derived from the Wholeness concept, are mirrored in all humanitarian values, and bring together constitutional law, social contractarian thought and moral theory; whereas the articles of the Bill of Rights are the result of these principles and established to promote them so that their light can shine forth as we mature as a society towards greater levels of understanding; whereas the Bill of Rights thus is established to ensure to all people, *without distinction of any kind*, protection against discriminatory, unjust, arbitrary and disproportional practices; whereas this obviously includes the world's 200-300 million drug users, and whereas the objective of human rights law therefore is to secure *also to them* the rights and protections recognized in the Bill of Rights: Considering that you undertake to strive for the advancement and observance of the rights and protections recognized in the Bill of Rights; considering that the principles you have a duty to promote and protect establish certain criteria that our system of law must be in accordance with in order to be lawful; considering that the legalization activists have assembled overwhelming evidence that the drug laws, as measured against these criteria, are found wanting; considering that these laws' societal function and consequence has been so devastating that they fulfill the criteria as gross human rights violations and crimes against humanity; considering that the legalization activists have presented documentation that legal scholars and drug policy experts around the world have concluded the same; considering that former officials of such stature as UN Secretary General and High Commissioner for Human Rights are among the people who have attested to this factual picture; considering that you have been presented with four questions that must be answered to the satisfaction of an independent, impartial and competent tribunal if these scholars' and experts' conclusions are to be refuted; considering that the prohibitionist regime has never been submitted to the test of reason and that our officials hitherto have refused to respond to these questions; considering that *the rule of law demands that they be answered*, but that every official so far confronted with the matter has flouted his duties and denied us our right to an effective remedy; considering that up to 300 million drug users therefore are without the protection of human rights law and considering that the validity of the social contract and your credibility as civil servants now depends on the degree to which you take the promotion and observance of human rights law seriously; considering that your responsibility not only to the world's drug users, but humanity at large, the rule of law, and the Bill of Rights you have a duty to protect and promote is clear; considering that objectively speaking there is no doubt that the legalization activists' concerns are valid and that in order to protect the integrity of the principles at the heart of the Bill of Rights you therefore need to see to it that human rights law rules supreme, that the matter is properly reviewed, and that these questions are satisfactorily answered; considering that if you fail to do so without adequately addressing the issues raised herein—that is, explaining *wherein* this chain of reasoning you disagree and/or *what more* corroboration we need to substantiate our contentions—it will become evident that your opposition to drug reform is blind; that it is motivated by ignorance and ignoble ambitions and that you are misusing your authority in an attempt to arrest the development of human rights rather than advance it; considering that in doing so you are, in effect, an enemy of all things good and decent, standing shoulder to shoulder with gangsters and war

profiteers against the rule of law and the interests of the human race, and that you rightfully can be persecuted as a willful participant in crimes against humanity: *All this considered, how will you explain your reasons for maintaining that the principles of human rights law do not apply to our drug laws? How will you explain your position and your rationale that the drug users somehow are exempt from a catalogue of rights that is inherent to every human being and that we are all supposed to enjoy?*

This is the challenge facing every prohibitionist. There are no two ways about it, and you should see to it that world leaders, as soon as possible, are informed of the essence of the rights-oriented debate so that they can prepare an argument that *either* refutes its merits *or* answers the questions it raises. There is still time to ensure that this issue is properly reviewed at the 2016 UNGASS, and I suggest that you act on this information immediately.

As regards the second point I was about to make on the subject of your duties to the world community, it specifically relates to the workings of the UN Human Rights Committee. As you well know, the purpose of the Bill of Rights is to ensure the enjoyment of human rights for *all people without distinction*, and the Committee's decision to deny us the protection of the Covenant is a grave violation in this regard. It cannot be justified on objective and reasonable grounds, for all procedural requirements are satisfied and the merits of the case should be self-evident from the documentation received. Just to give you an idea, the Committee has received more than a thousand pages of documentary proof supporting our assertions; the Committee has seen evidence that police officers, judges, professors, drug policy experts, prime ministers, justice ministers, a former UN High Commissioner of Human Rights and a former UN Secretary General all support the contentions made; it has seen that the destructive effects and consequences of prohibition, as well as its futility, is overwhelmingly agreed upon; that a majority of experts in the field agree with the basic premises of the complaint; and that several professors of law agree with its legal reasoning.

In other words, *the merits of the communication should be indisputable.* And considering that none so far have contested its legal reasoning—and that prohibitionists, rather than counter it, have shied away from their professional obligations—there is evidence to suggest that it is irrefutable.

Indeed, the prohibitionists' desperate maneuvering to avoid the challenges put forth by the rights-oriented debate leaves little doubt about their inability to disprove our contentions, for in what can only be described as a pitiful attempt to maintain the status quo, they have forsaken even the rule of law, leaving some 300 million at the mercy of despotism without an effective remedy.

Considering its ramification, I've asked the Committee either to explain their legal analysis in a duly reasoned, written judgment or reconsider their position. The Committee, however, will neither make sense of its position nor will it let us enjoy our catalogue of rights, and this is where you come into the picture.

It is after all a most serious matter when an institution whose purpose it is to monitor a UN Covenant fails to honor the principles and the spirit of the said Covenant. While lecturing others about the importance of human rights and good government principles such as transparency, inclusion, and accountability, its members have not only ignored the evidence it has received, but refused us access

to an independent, impartial and competent tribunal where we can prove our assertions. They have done this without having the decency to provide us with any reasoned analysis, while the questions we have are left unanswered.

The members of the Committee seem to think that the rights-oriented debate and the questions it raises will simply go away if they close their doors and their minds to it. However, the ramifications of their failure to recognize the merits of the debate without adequate explanation and without the proper procedural safeguards are a most serious matter for all parties involved. By its decision, its members have not only failed to keep the interests of society in mind by sabotaging our efforts stop a failed policy gone rogue; they have acted in an arbitrary fashion and put all pretence of impartiality aside; they have compromised the right to equality before the law and the right to a fair trial; they have impeded the administration of justice and undermined the UN system's ability to live up to its Charter obligations; and they have discouraged people from exercising their civil and political rights and from demanding that these rights be respected by arrogantly denying some 300 million access to justice. *In this manner, they have arrested the development of human rights; in this manner they have proven to be an instrument for despotism worldwide; and in this manner, they have incriminated themselves and weakened the UN's standing.*

Bearing in mind that respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms lies at the heart of all aims and objectives of the United Nations; that it is one of the central purposes of the United Nations Charter; and that UN officials have a special responsibility to ensure the enjoyment of human rights *for all people without distinction*, the position of the Committee is not only baffling but downright disgraceful and its double-standards must be dealt with.

After all, no person of "high moral character" and "recognized competence in the field of human rights" would have put themselves and the UN in such a compromising situation. In this matter, where the States of the world and the UN itself is accused of orchestrating a public policy so disastrous that it rightfully can be termed a crime against humanity, the committee members should have known that any misconduct on their part would come back to haunt them—and yet, the fact remains that they preferred to leave aside all pretence of respectability rather than let us challenge the status quo.

It could, of course, be that their willingness to hide the truth, to sabotage the rule of law, and deny the oppressed an effective remedy simply reflects gross incompetence on their part. However, a more sinister plot could also be afoot, for the Committee has acted with such a blatant disregard for the rule of law and the interests of humanity that it is likely to indicate something more than mere incompetence.

As conspiratorial as it might sound, history shows that the advancement of human rights has more often than not been stalled by ignorant, power-hungry officials and their self-serving agendas. Concerned as it is with protecting the individual from arbitrary rule and to secure an effective remedy against unjust infractions, the evolution of human rights is often seen as a threat to a variety of power groupings, for these factions' priority number one is usually securing for themselves more power and control and nothing threatens them more than having their practices compared to such principles as that of equality and proportionality.

These principles, after all, have the power to expose our rulers' oppression and deceit for what it is, and so it is that they have in practice sought to limit the influence of these principles. As a result, their light has never been allowed to fully shine forth, for the men of power have put great effort into creating a culture of impunity by seeking to control those institutions created in the name of human rights law.

The influence of sinister forces such as these is seldom recognized. Nonetheless, history speaks volumes about their efforts to manipulate economic, political, and judicial processes⁴ and it could be that these powers' reach has proven sufficient to compromise the integrity of the UN Human Rights Committee. This should be a major concern to us all, and so I ask that you investigate whether this decision was brought about as a result of one single individual's incompetence/lack of integrity, or if, indeed, it is symptomatic of a more systemic problem within the UN machinery.

As you well know, strengthening accountability of public officials is not only an important contributor to human rights protection; it is also our best defense against corruptive influences, and now that the UN apparatus itself seems to be plagued by the very same corruption and lack of independence that it warns against, it is of utmost importance that you take action.

Nothing less than the reputation of the UN depends on the degree to which you take your obligations to the UN Charter seriously, for if you fail to act on this information; if you refuse to look into the corrupt practices at the Committee, and if you fail to respond properly to our concerns, it will become obvious that the UN no longer abides by its Charter; that if it ever did, the entire Bill of Rights is now a ruse, a ploy to fool the citizens of the world into believing that our governments really have our best interests at heart; and that the organization itself is controlled by power-political factions whose main concern is their own lust for power.

On behalf of the world's drug users and human rights defenders, I therefore ask that you carefully review the documentation you have received; that you prove to be a champion for human rights and the rule of law; that you ensure that the UN Human rights apparatus lives up to its commitment to make its work relevant and applicable to all States parties; and that you will make every effort to strive for the enjoyment of all civil and political rights guaranteed by the Covenant, *in full and without discrimination*, by all people.

Yours Sincerely, Roar Mikalsen.

President of the Alliance for Rights-Oriented Drug Policies.

⁴ For more on this, see Appendix 4, part 5.