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FAX TRANSMISSION

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Date: April 7, 2003
Pages: 2, including this cover

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COMMENTS:

Copy of response to HRW.

WJH



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April 2, 2003

Mr. Kenneth Roth
Executive Director
Human Rights Watch
350 Fifth Avenue, 34th Floor
New York, NY 10118

Dear Mr. Roth:

This is in response to your December 26, 2002, letter to the President and other letters to senior administration officials regarding detention and questioning of enemy combatants captured in the war against terrorists of global reach after the terrorist attacks on the United States of September 11, 2001.

The United States questions enemy combatants to elicit information they may possess that could help the coalition win the war and forestall further terrorist attacks upon the citizens of the United States and other countries. As the President reaffirmed recently to the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, United States policy condemns and prohibits torture. When questioning enemy combatants, U.S. personnel are required to follow this policy and applicable laws prohibiting torture.

If the war on terrorists of global reach requires transfer of detained enemy combatants to other countries for continued detention on our behalf, U.S. Government instructions are to seek and obtain appropriate assurances that such enemy combatants are not tortured.

U.S. Government personnel are instructed to report allegations of mistreatment of or injuries to detained enemy combatants, and to investigate any such reports. Consistent with these instructions, U.S. Government officials investigate any known reports of mistreatment or injuries to detainees.

The United States does not condone torture. We are committed to protecting human rights as well as protecting the people of the United States and other countries against terrorists of global reach.

Sincerely,

William J. Haynes II

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