



United States Conference of Catholic Bishops

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November 4, 2010

The Honorable Hillary Rodham Clinton
Secretary of State
Department of State
Washington, DC 20520

Dear Secretary Clinton,

The horrific attack of October 31 on the Syrian Catholic Cathedral in Baghdad is a critical reminder of the need for a “responsible transition” in Iraq that protects all citizens, especially Christians and vulnerable minorities.

In our October 15 letter to you, we outlined some of the criteria for a “responsible transition.” This most recent murderous attack has demonstrated these urgent concerns for action: 1) regional and international partners must increase efforts to help train Iraq’s military and police to provide security for all citizens, including minorities, and to improve the judicial system and rule of law; 2) more must be done to expand reconciliation efforts and promote the protection of human rights, especially religious freedom, for all Iraqis; and 3) long-term solutions are required to assist refugees and internally displaced Iraqis. The United States must take a key role in helping the Iraqi government achieve these goals in order to advance peace and stability in the region.

Enclosed is a statement by Francis Cardinal George, President of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, reflecting on the terrible violence that claimed so many innocent lives. It calls on the United States to take additional steps to help Iraq protect its citizens, especially the most vulnerable.

Sincerely yours,

Handwritten signature of Howard J. Hubbard in black ink.

Most Reverend Howard J. Hubbard
Bishop of Albany
Chairman, Committee on International
Justice and Peace

Handwritten signature of John C. Wester in black ink.

Most Reverend John C. Wester
Bishop of Salt Lake City
Chairman, Committee on Migration

Encl: Cardinal George statement