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Helen Clark, MP
House of Commons
London SW1A 0AA

Dear Ms. Clark:

Thank you for your letter of 7 August 2003 to President Bush expressing concern related to the detainees held under U.S. control at a U.S. naval base in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.

As you note in your letter, the United States and its Coalition partners are at war with terror, in particular the al Qaida network and remnants of the Taliban who continue to support them. The al Qaida network today is a multinational enterprise with operations in more than 60 countries. Active hostilities are ongoing daily in Afghanistan and around the world. We continue to fight against enemy combatants who are planning and conducting attacks against us.

Let me assure you, however, that President Bush has affirmed on any number of occasions that al Qaida and Taliban detainees, regardless of their lack of status as POWs under the Third Geneva Convention of 1949, will be treated consistent with American values and the principles of the international law of armed conflict. He has determined that United States Armed Forces will treat enemy combatants humanely, and, to the extent consistent with military necessity, in a manner consistent with the principles of the Third Geneva Convention of 1949.

Sincerely,

Alexander Karagiannis
Director
United Kingdom, Benelux, and
Ireland Affairs