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UNITED STATES MISSION TO INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS
GENEVA, SWITZERLAND

April 5, 2004

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RELEASED IN FULL

Ms. Asma Jahangir
Special Rapporteur
Extrajudicial Summary or Arbitrary Executions
United Nations High Commissioner
for Human Rights
Palais des Nations
CH-1211 Geneva 10

Dear Ms. Jahangir:

The Government of the United States of America takes the opportunity to respond to your letters dated May 12, 2003 and May 20, 2003 that contain allegations regarding the ongoing military operations of the United States in its role as an occupying power in Iraq. The United States respectfully submits that inquiries related to military operations conducted by the United States in Iraq do not fall within the mandate of the Special Rapporteur, which does not extend to the laws and customs of war.

Although, as noted above, the issues raised and assertions contained in the letters do not fall within the Special Rapporteur's mandate, the United States is providing this reply in order to correct the record. Restoring security in Iraq is vital to the reconstruction of Iraq. U.S. military personnel are operating under Rules of Engagement that protect American servicemen and women in accomplishing their mission, while also ensuring appropriate protection for the civilian population. The Rules of Engagement in effect in Iraq are carefully drafted and comply fully with the law of war.

For the reasons discussed above, the Government of the United States of America respectfully requests that the Special Rapporteur discontinue her consideration of the issues raised in the above-referenced letters.

If I can be of further assistance, please feel free to contact my office.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey DeLaurentis
Counselor for Political Affairs