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# UNITED NATIONS

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Press Release

## SPECIAL RAPPORTEUR ON TORTURE SERIOUSLY CONCERNED BY REPORTS OF ABUSE OF IRAQI PRISONERS BY COALITION FORCES

3 May 2004

*Special Rapporteur on the question of torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights, Theo van Boven, issued the following statement today:*

The Special Rapporteur on torture is seriously concerned about recent reports of torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment of Iraqi detainees by United States of America and United Kingdom military forces serving under the Coalition Provisional Authority.

The freedom from torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment is a non-derogable right. The prohibition of torture is explicitly affirmed in article 5 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, article 7 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the Declaration on the Protection of All Persons from Being Subjected to Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, and the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, as well as in the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, relating to the treatment of prisoners and protection of civilians, and in the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court.

The Special Rapporteur calls upon all countries with forces serving in Iraq to take prompt and effective steps to investigate, prosecute and impose appropriate sanctions on any persons guilty of the alleged violations, as well as provide an effective remedy and adequate reparation for the victims of these abuses.