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Letter from the High Commissioner dated 11 October 2001

Proposal by the Chairman of the Committee against Torture

By letter dated 11 October 2001, the High Commissioner for Human Rights solicited the views of the Committee against Torture on the matter of ensuring that the human rights covered by our mandate are maintained with a high visibility in the light of various State responses to the events of 11 September 2001.

It is in the spirit of this request that the Committee against Torture decided to communicate directly with the State parties with the following statement:

Although mindful of the terrible threat to civilised society of international terrorism, the Committee against Torture reminds State parties of the non-derogable nature of most of the obligations undertaken by them in ratifying the Convention against Torture.

The obligations contained in Articles 2 and 15 are two such provisions and must be observed in all circumstances.

The Committee against Torture is confident that whatever responses to the threat of international terrorism are adopted by State parties, such responses will be in conformity with the obligations undertaken by them in ratifying the Convention against Torture.