



Statement

Global Rights Welcomes Strong Critique from U.N. Human Rights Committee of U.S. Government's Implementation of Its Human Rights Obligations

Washington, DC, July 28, 2006 – Today the United Nations Human Rights Committee issued a strong critique of the U.S. government's human rights record. Released in Geneva this morning, the Committee's *Concluding Observations* were based on: a report filed by the U.S. government in October 2005; the U.S. government's recent responses to Committee questions about the report; and on information provided by U.S. civil society groups, including Global Rights. Global Rights commends the Committee's recommendations and urges the United States Government to stop trying to avoid its obligations under human rights law and to protect the civil and political rights of all people living in the United States.

In its 12 page report, the Committee urged special attention to issues of racial discrimination in the United States. Problems such as de facto racial segregation in the public schools, racial profiling by law enforcement officials, and racial disparities in prosecuting and sentencing processes were highlighted by the Committee. The Committee also called upon the U.S. government to increase its efforts to ensure that the rights of poor people, and in particular African-Americans, are fully protected in the relief and reconstruction plans responding to the devastating impact of Hurricane Katrina last year. Global Rights will work with other civil society groups to ensure that the government addresses racial discrimination in its follow up to the Committee's recommendations.

Additionally, Global Rights welcomes the Human Rights Committee's concern about the violence and human rights abuses against lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) persons. Global Rights contributed to the first major submission by an unprecedented gathering of leading LGBT groups in the United States, calling attention to the country's questionable record on protecting LGBT rights. Global Rights applauds the Committee's recommendation that calls for the U.S. government to protect this community through effective federal and state legislation, and it will work with its partners to press for these changes in the months ahead.

The Committee's *Concluding Observations* did contain one significant omission – the protection of workers' rights in the United States. In both its written list of concerns and in its dialogue with the U.S. government, the Committee expressed serious concerns about increasing restrictions on workers' right to organize and the lack of judicial remedies for undocumented workers whose rights have been violated. Despite the omission of this important issue in the final *Concluding Observations*, the Committee's views on this issue were quite clear and called for action by the U.S. government to ensure that the rights of all workers are fully protected in the United States. Global Rights urges the U.S. to accept all of the Committee's recommendations and to take immediate actions to increase protection of human rights for all people.

Media contact: media@globalrights.org