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REFERENCE: md190705

19 July 2005

Dear Ambassador Moses,
Dear Mr. Neuer,

I wish to refer to your letter dated 7 July 2005 in which you raised some concerns regarding statements allegedly made by Mr. Jean Ziegler.

You will recall that in my letter to you dated 4 February 2005 on similar issues, I stated that the independence of the mandate-holders is one of the most important features of the special procedures. These features have been repeatedly reaffirmed in numerous resolutions of the Commission of Human Rights including resolution 2004/76 on human rights and special procedures which outlines, in particular, that the special procedures mandate-holders are accountable only to the Commission.

Having said this and further to your correspondence, I enquired with Mr. Jean Ziegler about the nature of his statement pronounced 13 July 2005 in Geneva during a demonstration for the Caravan for justice for Palestine. Mr. Ziegler informed me that he was participating in this initiative solely in his personal capacity, and that the statement you referred to was a quote from Michael Warschawski, an Israeli scholar.

As High Commissioner for Human Rights, and as a long standing human rights advocate, I feel free to disassociate myself with any reference to concentration camps in such circumstances as it is inevitably evocative of Nazi Germany, and in my view, inflammatory.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Louise Arbour', written over a white background.

Louise Arbour
High Commissioner for Human Rights

His Excellency
Mr. Alfred Moses
Mr. Hilel C. Neuer
UN Watch
1, Rue de Varembe
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Cc: The Secretary-General of the United Nations
Mr. Jean Ziegler, Special Rapporteur on the right to food