



United States Department of State

Washington, D.C. 20520

February 18, 2014

The Honorable
Vincent C. Gray
Mayor of the District of Columbia
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Suite 316
Washington, DC 20004

Dear Mayor Gray:

I am writing to you to bring to your attention the important efforts the U.S. government is making this year to showcase the United States' human rights record. As you know, the United States has a long and proud tradition of advancing the protection of human rights around the globe. We also uphold these values by protecting human rights here at home, consistent with our international human rights obligations. These obligations are implemented not only by the federal government, but also through the dedicated efforts of state, local, insular, and tribal governments throughout our country, in areas such as protecting the civil and political rights of our citizens, combating racial discrimination, and protecting children from harms such as pornography and prostitution.

Over the next 18 months, the U.S. government will make four different presentations to United Nations committees in Geneva showcasing the United States' human rights record. These presentations provide vital opportunities to demonstrate to the world our country's commitment to protecting human rights domestically through the operation of our comprehensive system of laws, policies, and programs at all levels of government – federal, state, local, insular, and tribal. We want you to be aware of these efforts because we are proud of this shared role in upholding and protecting human rights. Indeed, representatives from state and local governments have participated in some of the U.S. government's prior treaty presentations, and we hope to continue this practice in the future.

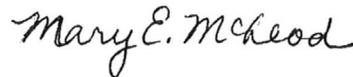
Our first human rights presentation this year, in March 2014, will explain how the United States is implementing its obligations under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), one of the seminal human rights treaties concluded following World War II. This will be followed in August by a similar presentation on U.S. government efforts to eliminate racial discrimination, consistent with the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD), and a presentation in November regarding the Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT). In January 2015, we will submit the United States' second report under the UN Human Rights Council's Universal Periodic Review (UPR) process, followed by the presentation of this report in April or May 2015.

Additional information about these presentations is attached, and we encourage your office to follow the presentations, including through webcasts when available.

The federal government will continue to need your help in the future in implementing our human rights obligations, consulting with the public about these issues, and identifying areas for improvement. Accordingly, we encourage you to share this information broadly with other appropriate officials within your jurisdiction, such as the office of the attorney general, law enforcement agencies, human rights agencies, and county and local governments.

If you have any questions, or if you have an interest in taking a more active role as we prepare for these presentations, we invite you to contact us through the State Department's Office of the Special Representative for Intergovernmental Affairs at IGA_humanrights@state.gov.

Best regards,



Mary E. McLeod
Principal Deputy Legal Adviser
U.S. Department of State

Attachment:
[U.S. Human Rights Presentations in 2014-15](#)

Cc:
U.S. Conference of Mayors
National Association of Counties
National Governors Association
National Association of Attorneys General
International Association of Official Human Rights Agencies