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February 16, 2006

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His Excellency Dumisani S. Kumalo
Permanent Representative of the Republic of South Africa
to the United Nations
Chairman of the Group of 77
United Nations, Room S-3959
New York, New York 10017

Dear Mr. Ambassador:

We are writing with regard to the outrageous attack you have launched on behalf of the Group of 77 against the United Nations Secretariat for its aggressive effort to shine a light on the corruption that has infected the United Nations (UN) procurement office.

Your February 6, 2006, letter to UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan absurdly asserts that the Group of 77 stands with those of us urging much-needed reform of UN management practices, while simultaneously blistering the Secretariat for its admirable public disclosure of a UN audit that documents a massive kickback and bribery scandal by UN procurement officers and UN contractors. Apparently, the Group of 77 and China would rather keep citizens of the world in the dark about the hundreds of millions of dollars that have been stolen from them by corrupt UN officials and companies contracting with them. Reform of the UN hinges upon greater transparency and accountability to the people of the world, especially to the citizens of those few nations who bear the burden of financing UN programs, many of which benefit nations belonging to your caucus.

From the outset of reform efforts, the Group of 77 has worked feverishly in New York to block the efforts of the Secretary-General and the Geneva Group to clean up the institution. We and our colleagues in the House of Representatives have followed, and will continue to follow, your actions very closely, and we intend to hold you accountable for them.

The most recent report detailing procurement abuse that correctly compelled the Secretariat to suspend eight employees, while alarming in its conclusions, highlights the very reason why reform efforts must be continued and even accelerated. With potential losses to the UN of nearly \$300 million in this most recent procurement scandal alone, this is not the time for

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obfuscation through bureaucratic and procedural objections. It is not enough to call for reform but to then limit its extent and pace. Reform must not be a selective program but an evolving, thorough examination and repair of how the UN adapts itself to a changing world. The status quo is no longer acceptable to a majority of Americans.

We urge you to recognize the need for reform of the United Nations and end the Group of 77's efforts to block much needed, meaningful and lasting changes.

Sincerely,


HENRY J. HYDE
Chairman


TOM LANTOS
Ranking Democratic Member