

Human

# HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH ARMS PROJECT

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Dear Prof. Meselson,

The Human Rights Watch Arms Project is expanding its work on chemical and biological weapons and is developing a database of specialized persons familiar with chemical and biological weapons. The Arms Project feels that HRW can contribute significantly to the prevention of the spread and use of chemical and biological weapons by melding its large international network of human rights activists, organizational skills, investigative methodology, and public standing with the scientific expertise of scientists, physicians, and other experts.

Human Rights Watch is the largest US-based independent human rights organization. The organization does not seek or accept any financing from governments or government-funded agencies. HRW has a great deal of experience in investigating and publicizing human rights violations, and the Arms Project brings this expertise to transfers of weapons, military assistance, and training to groups that commit gross violations of international human rights or the laws of war. This includes chemical and biological weapons which, being indiscriminate weapons of mass destruction and terror, inherently violate international human rights law.

Human Rights Watch has, using testimony and previously unreleased documentary evidence, documented over forty different Iraqi gas attacks against Kurdish villages in 1987-88, and in 1993, in cooperation with Physicians for Human Rights, was able to successfully prove on the basis of soil samples that Iraq had used CW's, specifically mustard gas and the nerve gas GB, in a series of attacks against the Kurdish village of Birjinni. (see enclosures)

Human Rights Watch receives numerous allegations of CBW production, trade,



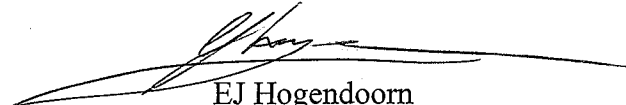
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and use, and would like to act on these claims, but currently lacks the technical expertise to assess the validity of these claims.

The database of experts would allow us to assess the veracity of any claims we do receive and would also provide a pool of experts whom we could ask to quickly respond to and investigate claims of CBW production, trade, and use. We know of no non-governmental group which is able to do this work consistently. The BWC provides no investigative mechanism, and with the delays in ratification of the CWC and treaty restrictions, the OPCW cannot be depended upon to solely perform this function in the area of CW's; nor should UNSCOM and governmental organizations be the sole groups that can investigate CBW claims.

We are asking for the names, contact addresses, and resumes of people with this particular interest. If you are interested, please send us a resume of your relevant work in the field of CBW, and include the names and addresses of other people in this field that you may be aware of, to our DC office. If you have any questions about this program, please do not hesitate to contact me or the director of the Arms Project, Dr. Joost Hiltermann. Our phone number is 202/371-6592. Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'EJ Hogendoorn', is written over a horizontal line.

EJ Hogendoorn  
Research Assistant