



United States Department of State

*Bureau for Democracy,
Human Rights, and Labor*

Washington, D.C. 20520-7827

June 27, 2013

Mr. Jamil Dakwar
Director
Human Rights Program
American Civil Liberties Union
125 Broad Street, 18th Floor
New York, NY 10004

Dear Mr. Dakwar:

We received your June 19, 2013 letter regarding the possible country visit of the Special Rapporteur on torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment, Professor Juan Mendez. Thank you for your interest in the Special Rapporteur's activities and mandate.

The United States is a strong advocate of the U.N. Human Rights Council's special procedures mechanisms and we are proud to have been a consistent supporter of this mandate in particular. The United States has had a close working relationship with Special Rapporteur Mendez, having corresponded on many issues – including “the use of solitary confinement” – and has met multiple times with Professor Mendez to discuss these issues. We have discussed the possibility of a country visit by the Special Rapporteur on several occasions, and recently encouraged Professor Mendez to submit a formal request detailing the scope and subject of his interests in this regard. This request was received on May 16, 2013, and the United States provided an interim response on June 7, 2013, indicating that we are in the process of considering the information provided in that letter.

The process for preparing and planning a country visit is one that requires significant internal U.S. government consideration and coordination. We assure you that the United States will continue to work closely with the Special Rapporteur and the Office of the High Commission on Human Rights to structure a visit that will allow him to carry out his mandate effectively.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael G. Kozak", written over a horizontal line.

Michael G. Kozak
Acting Assistant Secretary