

For Immediate Release
June 27, 2005

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PRESS CONFERENCE ALERT

TUESDAY, JUNE 28

10:00 A.M.

OUTSIDE THE UNITED NATIONS – PREGNY ENTRANCE
GENEVA

FAST FOR ECONOMIC JUSTICE FOR IRAQ

DEMANDS AN END TO WAR REPARATIONS IMPOSED AGAINST
IRAQ

PARTICIPANTS INCLUDE:

KATHY KELLY

nominee for the Nobel Peace Prize and co-founder of Voices in the Wilderness, a campaign to end economic and military warfare against Iraq. Ms. Kelly organized and traveled with numerous U.S. delegations which brought medicine to Iraqis, in a campaign of civil disobedience to challenge U.S. sanctions laws.

CAOIMHE BUTTERLY

Irish activist who lived in Iraq prior to the U.S. invasion and during the occupation of Iraq. Ms. Butterly currently organizes in solidarity with Iraqi unionists who are struggling to prevent the privatization of the oil industry.

In addition to Ms. Kelly and Ms. Butterly, the following are fasting in Geneva: Lisa Faulkner, Rita Jankowska-Bradley, Cynthia Banas, Cathy Breen, Farah Mokhtareizadeh and Jeff Leys.

Geneva, Switzerland – On June 28 the United Nations Compensation Commission (U.N.C.C.) will begin its final session to consider war reparations claims filed against Iraq due to Saddam Hussein's invasion and occupation of Iraq in 1990-91. The Fast for Economic Justice for Iraq enters its thirteenth day during which activists have gone without food in order to protest the injustice of the war

reparations process and to call for the cancellation of any further war reparations payments.

The U.N.C.C. will consider 65 billion dollars (54 billion Euro) in war reparations claims filed against Iraq. Only 1 billion dollars (0.83 billion Euro) stem from individual losses. The remainder are claims filed by multinational corporations, state owned enterprises or governments. The U.N.C.C. will determine what amount of these claims to impose at the conclusion of its meeting on June 30th.

The U.N.C.C. has already imposed 52 billion dollars (43 billion Euro) in claims against Iraq, of which Iraq has paid 19 billion dollars (15.8 billion Euro). Nearly all individual claims have been paid in full by Iraq. The overwhelming majority of the outstanding unpaid imposed charges would be due to Kuwait and its state owned enterprises.

“We traveled to Geneva to fast, to go without food for 16 days, in the hopes that our small sacrifice would in some manner awaken the conscience of the international community to the economic warfare being waged against the Iraqi people,” says Caoimhe Butterly of Ireland. “Our sacrifice is indeed minimal compared to the suffering of the Iraqi people. Child malnutrition has nearly doubled since the occupation of Iraq began. Hospitals remain in disrepair and shortages of medicine are rampant. Electricity is sporadic at best. Security is virtually non-existent.

“And yet at this moment of crisis in the lives of Iraqis,” Ms. Butterly continues, “the United Nations stands poised to impose up to another 65 billion dollars in war reparations claims against Iraq. The Iraqi people had no choice when Saddam Hussein’s regime invaded Kuwait. He was wrong to do so. It is equally wrong to continue to punish the Iraqi people for the crimes of Saddam Hussein.”

The Fast for Economic Justice for Iraq was initiated by Jubilee Iraq and Voices in the Wilderness. The primary fast is in Geneva, Switzerland with others fasting in Amman and New York City, Chicago, San Francisco, Sacramento, Montana and Camden. Fast participants include representatives from Jubilee Iraq, Voices in the Wilderness, Jubilee USA Network, Progressive Democrats of America, and Coalition for Democracy in Haiti.

Additional information on the fast may be found on the websites of Voices in the Wilderness (www.vitw.org) and Jubilee Iraq (www.jubileeiraq.org). Information on the other participating organizations may be found at: Jubilee USA Network (www.jubileeusa.org) and Progressive Democrats of America (www.pdamerica.org).