Subject: Security Council discussion on Irak

Las Cruces, USA, February 24, 2003,

Dear Minister,

The United Nations’ Security Council will soon discuss the situation in Irak and the arms control in that country. Although this issue is complicated and many arguments need to be taken into account, I would like to express my deep concern for the safety of the civilians in Iraq and surrounding countries in the event of military action. Journal articles reporting on the current plans for war that some country members have been working on, mention the possibility that hundreds of thousands civilians may be killed; that possibility alone will, one must fear, determine many more to flee their home and try to avoid combats and bombings, leading to a major humanitarian catastrophe.

Therefore I urge the UN Security Council to hold a session open to all member states of the UN and undertake a full assessment of the likely consequences of war.

The potential effects of military action on the human rights of the Iraqi population need to be fully presented and weighted before such a decision is taken, especially given the current difficulties and sufferings endured by the Iraqi people.

In the event of a war, potential grave violations of international humanitarian law, including direct attacks on civilians, the use of human shields and the use of inherently indiscriminate weapons cannot be ignored. For this reason I urge the Security Council to immediately deploy human rights monitors throughout Iraq to report on human rights abuses by any party.

Thanking you in advance for your time on this important and urgent matter, I am respectfully,

Cc: H.E. Mr. Jean-Marc de la Sablière