



AMERICAN
PSYCHOLOGICAL
ASSOCIATION

March 16, 2004

The Honorable Colin L. Powell
Secretary of State
2201 C St, NW
Washington, DC 20520

Dear Mr. Secretary:

I am writing to you on behalf of the American Psychological Association (APA) to ask that the United States support action by the United Nations Commission on Human Rights (UNCHR) to establish that human rights violations on the basis of sexual orientation are legitimate concerns for all states and international bodies concerned with human rights. It is our understanding that during its 60th Session, the UNCHR will consider a resolution on Human Rights and Sexual Orientation that will be introduced by the Brazilian delegation. We urge the US to vote in favor of the resolution that expresses concern about human rights violations on the basis of sexual orientation, asserts that sexual orientation should not be the basis for impediments to the full enjoyment of human rights and freedoms, and calls upon states, the Commission on Human Rights, and the High Commissioner for Human Rights to affirmatively address human rights violations on the basis of sexual orientation.

APA has had a longstanding and active concern to remove the stigma of mental illness that has been associated with same-sex sexual orientation and to oppose prejudice, discrimination, and violence against lesbian, gay, and bisexual people and others who desire or engage in same-sex relationships. Both psychological research and professional judgment indicate that there is no justification for denying same-sex oriented men and women their human rights and freedoms. Nevertheless, it is incontrovertible that lesbian, gay, and bisexual people suffer many impediments to the full enjoyment of human rights and freedoms. For these reasons, the APA strongly urges the United States to vote in the UN Commission on Human Rights in favor of a resolution on Human Rights and Sexual Orientation, such as that introduced last year by the Brazilian delegation. APA, in general, encourages the US to support actions that will make a positive contribution to

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Norman B. Anderson, Ph.D.
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The Secretary of State
March 16, 2004
Page two

the human rights, health, and well-being of lesbian, gay, and bisexual people and others who desire or engage in same-sex relationships.

I am enclosing for your information the statement of the APA on this matter to the UN CHR. If my staff or I may be of further assistance in this matter, please contact Clinton Anderson at (202) 336-6037 or canderson@apa.org.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Norman B. Anderson", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Norman B. Anderson, PhD
Executive Vice President/Chief Executive Officer

Enc

cc Lorne W. Craner, Assistant Secretary for Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor
Kim R. Holmes, Assistant Secretary for International Organization Affairs