

INDEPENDENT INQUIRY COMMITTEE
INTO
THE UNITED NATIONS OIL-FOR-FOOD PROGRAMME

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**INDEPENDENT INQUIRY COMMITTEE RESPONDS TO US SENATE REQUEST FOR
INFORMATION FROM UNITED NATIONS CONCERNING OIL-FOR-FOOD PROGRAMME**

The Independent Inquiry Committee (IIC) into the United Nations Oil-for-Food Programme today released a letter responding in detail to questions by the U.S. Senate about IIC and UN disclosure policies.

Specifically, the Senate Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations on Governmental Affairs Chairman Norm Coleman and Ranking Minority Member Carl Levin wrote to U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan last week about these matters, complaining that the United Nations and the IIC were withholding documents and witnesses from the Senate's Investigations Committee. The letter from Paul Volcker, Chairman of the IIC, is addressed to each of them.

The main points of the IIC letter include:

- The essential aim of the IIC investigation is to get at, and report on, the truth about the allegations of U.N. mal-administration, misconduct, and possible corruption of the Oil-for-Food Programme, matters of great dispute.
- In the interest of transparency and credibility, full disclosure of evidence, (including U.N. documents available to it) relevant to its findings will be made when those findings are reported.
- Partial and premature disclosure of sensitive internal documents or demands for Congressional appearances of U.N. employees will be damaging to the pursuit of

investigative leads, chill participation of those called upon to cooperate with the IIC, and risk misleading, prejudicial, and un-fair impressions of institutional, personal, and member state behavior.

- Consistent with these points the IIC stands ready to cooperate, on a case to case basis, with national investigatory agencies or bodies seeking assistance in pursuing specific charges of potentially illicit and criminal acts by those participating in purchases of oil or sales of goods under the Oil-for-Food Programme.

The IIC has been authorized by a Resolution of the Security Council sponsored by the United States. The Resolution, calling upon the cooperation of all member states, provides both a unique opportunity and heavy responsibility for a full and fair investigation. At the end of the day, there will be disclosures and transparency without, to the best of the Committee's knowledge, precedent for the U.N. or any international organization.

The Committee recognizes that the conduct of its investigations and its conclusions will, and should be, subject to review by the Congress and others, in the United States and elsewhere. It also believes that its findings of fact will be in the interests of the U.N. itself and all member states in making needed reforms of an institution vitally important to international cooperation.

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November 16, 2004