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May 9, 2006

Kevin Sorenson, MP, Chair
Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development
c/o Angela Crandall
Clerk of the Committee
Room 637
180 Wellington St
House of Commons
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6
Canada

Dear Mr. Sorenson:

I recently attended a meeting of the Canadian National Committee on Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALWs) at Foreign Affairs Canada and was shocked at what I was told.

I am writing to ask that you review the attached report before it is presented to the United Nations in June.

The chair of this committee, Earl Turcotte, reported that, even though they do not have a mandate from the new Conservative government, they intend to continue acting as if they had.

The Canadian National Committee on SALW has spent tens of millions of dollars – possibly hundreds of millions -- on a large number of vague “feel good” projects around the world. At least 24 different international programs and initiatives are listed as being funded or largely funded by them. (These are listed in the Report appended to this letter).

The SALW Committee is downplaying the importance of evaluating the effectiveness of these projects in attaining their stated goals of reducing terrorism, criminal violence or suicide. There is no convincing empirical support for the success of these projects.

Apparently, one of the primary goals of this committee, set by the previous government, is to embarrass the United States at the United Nations. I hope that a Conservative

government would wish to stop supporting a committee that purposefully undermines the government's stated aims of improving relations with the United States.

Mr. Turcotte stated that the United Nations mandate for the 2001 "Program of Action on SALWs" expires this year, and it needs to be renewed for the Canadian National Committee on SALW to continue. If the Conservatives act quickly it may be possible to stop this Liberal boondoggle in Foreign Affairs..

Another goal of this committee is to urge the United Nations to abandon the practice of decision-making by consensus that currently exists in UN committees. Given that a small minority of countries pays the bills at the UN, the United States strongly opposes such an irresponsible practice.

I would ask that you review the CANADIAN REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS PROGRAMME OF ACTION TO PREVENT, COMBAT AND ERADICATE THE ILLICIT TRADE IN SMALL ARMS AND LIGHT WEAPONS IN ALL ITS ASPECTS before it is presented to the United Nations in late June.

Respectfully yours,

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Garry Breitkreuz, MP, Committee Chair,
Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security
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Attachments (2):

CANADIAN REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS
PROGRAMME OF ACTION TO PREVENT, COMBAT AND ERADICATE THE
ILLICIT TRADE IN SMALL ARMS AND LIGHT WEAPONS IN ALL ITS ASPECTS

Agenda of the National Committee on Small Arms and Light Weapons, Wednesday, 3
May 2006