



1400 16<sup>th</sup> Street NW  
Washington, DC 20036  
202 729 6791

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

Contact: Kay Guinane  
(202) 729-6791  
[kguinane@charityandsecurity.org](mailto:kguinane@charityandsecurity.org)

**Human Rights Day Petition Supports Reform of Security Laws that Hinder Charities**

Washington, DC – Dec. 10, 2010

Today, the 62<sup>nd</sup> anniversary of the United Nations General Assembly's adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Charity and Security Network launched an online petition calling on the U.S. government to change U.S. counterterrorism policy to be consistent with international human rights standards that protect vital aid, development and peacebuilding efforts of charities operating around the world.

In part, the petition says these laws "sweep too broadly, criminalizing efforts at peacebuilding and life saving humanitarian aid to civilians, even where that aid furthers no terrorist acts whatsoever."

It calls on the U.S. government to:

- "1. Reform the prohibition on material support to preserve the right to provide humanitarian assistance to civilians, and to protect free speech, association and peacebuilding.
2. Reform the process for designating groups and individuals to terrorist lists to ensure that they have sufficient notice and a meaningful opportunity to respond to the charges against them, and to ensure that the system includes sufficient checks and balances on executive discretion."

Kay Guinane, Program Manager of the Charity and Security Network, said, "Humanitarian aid and peacebuilding programs that urge terrorists to lay down their arms reflect the best of American values. Their work should be encouraged, not made illegal. U.S. charities deserve security laws that are fair, transparent and proportionate."

**The petition is available online at**  
[http://www.change.org/petitions/view/reform\\_security\\_laws\\_that\\_hinder\\_charities](http://www.change.org/petitions/view/reform_security_laws_that_hinder_charities)

###