

December 20, 2005

Dear Congress Member,

The 216th General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, in June 2004, approved a statement entitled, "Resolution on Allegations of Child sexual Abuse Against Educators". In light of this resolution, the Washington Office of the Presbyterian Church (USA) was instructed to inform members of Congress of our churches support for "speedy ratification of the *United Nations' Convention on the Rights of the Child* by the United States government".

In this resolution we also urged our churches "to approve and implement strong sexual misconduct policies procedures, and training programs for prevention of and protection from sexual misconduct." In 2001, the Presbyterian Church (USA) General Assembly "Pledge(ed) to make the commitment to children evident in the church's own celebration of Year of the Child, a permanent priority in the life of the church; renewing the vision statement made by the 205th General Assembly in 1993.

Also, "Call(s) upon congregations to study the Convention on the Rights of the Child to learn how it is designed to support and strengthen families and the role of parents, and how it advances the freedoms, protection, and guarantees that are the human rights of children.

The Assembly, "Renew(ed) its call on the United States government, the only government in the world that has not done so, to ratify the Convention on the Rights of the Child, in order to give the full support of our government and people to the promotion and protection of the dignity and rights of children, not only in our country, but throughout the world." The Convention is designed to prevent the use of children as soldiers and to prevent the commercial sexual exploitation of children through sale, prostitution, and child pornography.

The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (USA), is the highest governing body of this 217 year old denomination with 11,200 congregations in the United States and Puerto Rico. If you have further questions, please call me at 202-543-1126.

In faith,

Rev. Elenora Giddings Ivory

Director, Washington Office

Presbyterian Church (USA)