

The logo for the New York City Bar, featuring the text "NEW YORK CITY BAR" in a serif font, centered between two horizontal blue bars.

NEW YORK  
CITY BAR

PATRICIA M. HYNES  
**PRESIDENT**  
Phone: (212) 382-6700  
Fax: (212) 768-8116  
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October 2, 2008

Hon. Hillary Rodham Clinton  
United States Senate  
476 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Hon. Charles Schumer  
United States Senate  
313 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510-3201

Dear Senators Clinton and Schumer:

I am writing on behalf of the Association of the Bar of the City of New York. The Association is an independent non-governmental organization with more than 23,000 members in over 50 countries. Founded in 1870, the Association has a long history of dedication to human rights and international justice, notably through its Committee on International Human Rights, which investigates and reports on human rights conditions around the world, including in the United States.

We are writing to urge you to please press the government of Senegal to move forward expeditiously to prosecute the former dictator of Chad, Hissène Habré, for crimes against humanity, torture, and other very serious crimes under international law committed during his rule. We are also asking for your help in garnering U.S. financial support for that extremely important trial.

Hissène Habré ruled Chad from 1982–1990, during which time his regime committed systematic human rights violations, including thousands of political killings, widespread torture, and campaigns of ethnic cleansing. Files of Habré’s political police, obtained by Human Rights Watch, contain the names of more than 12,000 victims of grave human rights abuses, and those of more than 1,200 who died in detention. Mr. Habré’s victims have been seeking justice for his crimes since his ouster in 1990, and many of the surviving victims have since died. Time is quickly running out.

With the aid of Human Rights Watch, Habré was indicted in Senegal in 2000, but due to procedural delays, he was not arrested until 2005. In 2006, the African Union, echoing recommendations of the United Nations Committee against Torture, requested that Senegal prosecute Habré, and President Abdoulaye Wade of Senegal agreed to do so. However, Senegal has yet to commence a case against Habré, and has requested international assistance with the investigation and trial. The prosecution of massive crimes committed in another country a generation ago will be complex and expensive, but well worth the effort and U.S. support.


Mr. Habré's trial will be a milestone in the fight to hold the perpetrators of atrocities responsible for their crimes worldwide. Senegal's agreement in 2006 to try Habré marked a turning point in the long effort to bring him to justice, but we need your help and U.S. support.

The European Union, and several of its member states, including Belgium, France and the Netherlands, as well as Switzerland, have already agreed in principle to assist Senegal. We understand that the State Department War Crimes Office is also exploring ways to make this landmark trial a reality.

We urge you to (1) weigh in with the State Department to show your support for U.S. involvement in the case; (2) contact President Wade to applaud his decision to prosecute Hissène Habré in Senegal and to urge him to move forward expeditiously; and (3) press for U.S. financial assistance to make the prosecution of these extremely heinous crimes a reality, before the remaining survivors of the crimes die and it is too late.

Thank you for your prompt attention to this request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Patricia M. Hynes". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "P" and "H".

Patricia M. Hynes



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October 2, 2008

Mr. Clint Williamson  
Ambassador-at-Large, War Crimes Issues  
U.S. Department of State  
2201 C Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20520

Dear Ambassador-at-Large Williamson:

I am writing on behalf of the Association of the Bar of the City of New York. The Association is an independent non-governmental organization with more than 23,000 members in over 50 countries. Founded in 1870, the Association has a long history of dedication to human rights and international justice, notably through its Committee on International Human Rights, which investigates and reports on human rights conditions around the world, including in the United States.

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We urge you to (1) contact President Wade to applaud his decision to prosecute Hissène Habré in Senegal and to urge him to move forward expeditiously with the case; and (2) work to provide financial and technical assistance to Senegal to make the prosecution of these extremely heinous crimes a reality, before the remaining survivors of the crimes die and it is too late.

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