



THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

September 1, 2016

Sister Sharon Zayac
and Sister Patricia Farrell
River Forest, Illinois

Dear Sister Patricia and Sister Sharon:

Thank you for writing. America's dedication to universal human rights does not stop at our borders. In too many places, people are still persecuted for their beliefs, imprisoned for their ideals, and punished for their convictions. As a Nation committed to upholding freedom and equality for all, we insist on respecting the value and dignity of every person—no matter where they live, what they believe, or who they are.

Many countries have pledged themselves to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights because they recognize that restricting the rights and opportunities of any people tears at our social fabric and our common humanity. But expressions of support are not enough. Now more than ever, we must shine a spotlight on the dark corners where injustice persists.

We have a moral obligation to pursue the world as it should be—in the Americas and the Middle East, across Africa and Asia, and throughout Europe. Human dignity and justice demand that no man, woman, or child should ever be exploited, and no person should be denied their human rights because of how they pray or who they love. And leaders and extremists who cling to power and fan the flames of hate and division will continue to be challenged from within and isolated abroad.

We must not hesitate to stand on the side of those reaching for their universal rights. Using the extensive diplomatic and economic tools at our disposal, we will keep working to amplify the courageous voices sounding the call for change. We still have more to do, and as those in the international community take charge of their destiny, the United States stands ready to do our part to support them.

Thank you, again, for writing. I want you to know I am dedicated to forging a path to a future of greater freedom, democracy, opportunity, and justice for all. To learn more about my Administration's work to safeguard human rights around the world, help prevent mass atrocities, and replace tyranny with good governance, visit www.HumanRights.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Barack", with a large, stylized initial "B" and a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.