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SOCIAL RIGHTS INITIATIVE

PRESS RELEASE

International Activists Decry the Demolition of Public Housing in New Orleans

April 10, 2008

On April 10, 2008, the International Alliance of Inhabitants (IAI) formally adopted New Orleans, Louisiana as the most recent site for its global Zero Evictions Campaign. IAI is particularly dismayed over the recent demolitions of public housing in New Orleans, especially as they violate international human rights. IAI has garnered international support for public housing residents living in New Orleans.

So far, over 70 organizations spanning five continents have endorsed the ***Stop the Evictions and Corruption in New Orleans*** campaign. IAI has also sent a formal letter to President George W. Bush, requesting that he halt any further demolitions of public housing in New Orleans and ensure the right to participation for public housing residents in the city's rebuilding process.

Cesare Ottolini of the IAI stated: "The world has to know about the suffering of public housing residents taking place in New Orleans, particularly among African Americans and poor people. Therefore, today we have launched a global platform, so that international public opinion can convince the U.S. government, by the force of our solidarity, to respect the rule of law and human rights. Since we are dealing with a true humanitarian crisis, we have requested urgent action on the part of our international allies, and have requested the immediate involvement of the UN Advisory Group on Forced Evictions of UN-Habitat."

The ***Stop the Evictions and Corruption in New Orleans*** campaign is the latest international support for public housing residents in New Orleans. In February 2007, the UN Special Rapporteur on Adequate Housing and the UN Independent Expert on Minority Rights issued a joint press release urging the U.S. government to halt the demolitions. On March 7, 2008, the UN Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination in its Concluding Remarks to the U.S. report likewise noted concern for the then pending demolitions. The Committee noted the "disparate impact that [the] natural disaster[s] continue to have on low income African Americans" and called for local and federal governments to help Katrina's displaced.

To learn more about the ***Stop the Evictions and Corruption in New Orleans*** campaign and become an endorser, visit: <http://eng.habitants.org/Campaigns-Zero-Evictions>

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