



**Organisation Internationale pour la Protection des Animaux**  
Organizzazione Internazionale per la Protezione degli Animali  
International Organisation for Animal Protection  
Internationale Organisation für Tierschutz

**Non Governmental Organisation (NGO) associated with the UN Department of Public Information**

Wednesday, February 27, 2008

To:

- President of the Republic of Serbia - Mr. Boris Tadic
- Prime Minister - Mr. Vojislav Kostunica
- Minister of Agriculture - Mr. Slobodan Milosavljevic

Copy:

- Members of the European Parliament

*Dear sir/madam,*

I am writing you on behalf of OIPA. **OIPA** - International Organization for Animal Protection, is an International Confederation of associations (today, 167) for the animal protection and for the defence of animal rights all over the world. Founded in 1981 by Milly Shar Manzoli, OIPA is a Non Governmental Organisation associated to the UN Department of Public Information since 1992. The purpose of the Organization consists in the defence of animal rights and in the defence of the animals from every kind of mistreatment. It also follows the purpose of improving the public health through the abolishment of any kind of animal experiments throughout the world. The Organization wants to bring its contribute for a better, a healthier and a more human world, for a medical science that is not based on violence, for a more efficient sanitarian structure, for an ecologically clean environment.

Today in Serbia, thousands of unwanted animals will suffer and die. A shocking number of dogs, cats, and others are born daily into a world whose homes and hearts don't have room for them.

For every one companion animal who lives inside with a human family and receives the attention (toys, love, companionship, etc.) health care, and emotional support that he or she needs, there are many more who are just barely surviving. Thousands of domestic animals never know a kind human hand. They live hard lives on the street before dying equally hard, agonizing deaths.

One unspayed dog and her offspring can lead to 67,000 dogs in six years. One unspayed cat and her offspring can produce 400,000 cats in seven years (*The Humane Society of the United States, "HSUS Pet Overpopulation Estimates," 2004*).

Whatever the reason, the number of cats and dogs far exceeds the number of loving homes available. Unwanted animals are often treated as a nuisance; incidents of kitten drownings and dog abandonments are common. Many people drop animals off in rural areas, thinking that someone will take them in or that they can fend for themselves. But the tragic fates for these animals include cruel treatment, starvation, disease, freezing, highway death, procurement for research laboratories, and more unregulated breeding.

Even if someone can find homes for one litter of kittens or puppies, the overpopulation cycle continues if the animals are allowed to breed.

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**Spaying and neutering** helps stem the tide of overpopulation. The real answer to the massive street animal population in Serbia is for all authorities to adopt a sterilisation programme. A **'NO KILL'** policy. It must be a national priority to reduce the number of stray animals over time. Shinters/dogcatchers are not animal control agencies - they are simply communal enterprises working on controlling the stray dog and cat populations.

The proposed Serbian legislation due to be introduced within the next month, which will be named 'Article 73', states that after 30 days, stray dogs and cats can be euthanased if nobody adopts them. Instead of a time period of 30 days being defined as the maximum for keeping animals within the pound before commencing their destruction, OIPA asks that the national legislation defines that there is a **'NO MAXIMUM'** period of time defined by law, and that with the help and assistance of animal welfare organisations, animals be kept within the pounds indefinitely, until the necessary sterilisation, vaccination and fitting of ident tags to the animal(s) is undertaken.

*Every cat or dog who dies as a result of pet overpopulation—whether inhumanely in a shelter or by injury, disease, or neglect—is an animal who, more often than not, would have made a wonderful companion, if given the chance.*

Tremendous as the problem of pet overpopulation is, it can be solved if each of us takes just one small step, starting with not allowing animals to breed.

The solution is this: only by implementing widespread **sterilization programs**, only by spaying and neutering all companion animals, will you get a handle on pet overpopulation. Consider the fact that in six short years, one female dog and her offspring can give birth to hundreds of puppies. And, in seven years, one cat and her young can produce hundreds of kittens. Given these high reproductive rates, it stands to reason that, in only a few years, carefully planned and implemented sterilization programs could produce a dramatic **reduction in the number of unwanted companion animals born**. In fact, according news that we received from other countries, in those towns and cities that have implemented such programs, we've already seen the number of companion animals who had to be euthanized decline by 30 to 60 percent—even in those communities where human populations have been steadily increasing. Successful pet population control programs range from subsidized sterilization clinics to cooperative efforts involving local veterinarians to mass media educational campaigns. Only through the continued nationwide establishment of such programs you will bring an end to the tragedy of pet overpopulation. Education, too, is an essential part of solving this problem. Unless people know the facts about pet overpopulation and sterilization, they are virtually helpless to do anything about the problem.

**Rabies** is a viral disease that affects the central nervous system of warm-blooded animals, including humans. The disease has a long incubation period (six months) and symptoms may take several weeks to appear after infection. However, once symptoms appear, rabies is always fatal in animals. The rabies virus is a lyssavirus, a group of viruses responsible for causing encephalitis that also includes several recently identified bat lyssaviruses. Lyssaviruses belong to the family Rhabdoviridae. The name *Rhabdo* comes from the Greek and identifies the characteristic bullet or rod-shape of the viruses. There are several strains of the classic rabies virus that are each generally confined to a major species as reservoir.

Rabies has been recognized for centuries. It wasn't until the 1880's when work done by Louis Pasteur identified a virus as the cause of the disease. Rabies is a disease listed in the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE) Terrestrial Animal Health Code, 2007, (Article 2.1.1.3) and must be reported to the OIE (Chapter 1.1.2 – Notification of Diseases and Epidemiological Information).

**Rabies** is a highly fatal viral disease of humans and all other warm blooded animals. The virus is present in the saliva of infected animals and is generally transmitted by the bite of diseased animals – most commonly dogs and other carnivores. The rabies virus is present on all continents except Antarctica. Some countries have implemented vigilant control measures and succeeded in eradicating the disease to meet the OIE requirements for rabies free status.

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However, in some countries, the disease remains endemic with rabies present mainly in wild animal hosts. Although the infection of domestic livestock could have economic consequences in some countries, it is the occurrence of rabies in domestic dogs posing a threat to humans that is of major concern in several developing and in-transition countries.

The **OIE** - Organisation Mondiale de la Santé Animale - provides science-based standards, guidelines and recommendations for the control of the disease in animals and to prevent the spread of the disease through trade as well as standards for the diagnosis of the disease and the preparation of vaccines for use in animals. Through its network of *Reference Laboratories and Collaborating Centers* the OIE provides policy advice, strategy design and technical assistance for the diagnosis, control and eradication of rabies.

- European countries implementing effective wildlife rabies control programs that include oral vaccination campaigns have successfully eliminated the disease in wildlife (Switzerland 1999; France 2000; Belgium and Luxembourg 2001; Czech Republic 2004).
- Population control and/or oral vaccination programmes for domestic and stray animals are being implemented in several developing countries where rabies is endemic.
- Eradication is underway in North American countries

Some countries have implemented vigilant control measures and succeeded in eradicating the disease. In countries where the disease is endemic, measures are implemented to address and reduce the risk of infection in susceptible populations (wildlife, stray and domestic animals) and create a buffer between the animal source of the disease and humans.

- Surveillance and reporting of suspected cases of rabies in animals
- **Vaccination programs for domestic animals**
- Research into disease dynamics, **vaccines** and effective delivery mechanisms for target populations
- Wildlife rabies control programs including **vaccination (trap/vaccinate/release or delivery of oral vaccines)**
- **Population control and vaccination programs for stray animal populations**

This website provides information to national veterinary services and veterinary professionals, farmers, media and the general public <http://www.oie.int>

**Dogfighting** is a sadistic "contest" in which two dogs—specifically bred, conditioned, and trained to fight—are placed in a pit (generally a small arena enclosed by plywood walls) to fight each other for the spectators' entertainment and gambling.

The injuries inflicted and sustained by dogs participating in dogfights are frequently severe, even fatal. Dogs used in these events often die of blood loss, shock, dehydration, exhaustion, or infection hours or even days after the fight. Other animals are often sacrificed as well. Some owners train their dogs for fights using smaller animals such as cats, rabbits or small dogs. These "bait" animals are often stolen pets or animals obtained through "free to good home" advertisements. Illegal gambling is the norm at dogfights.

Dogs used for fighting have been bred for many generations to be dangerously aggressive toward other animals. The presence of these dogs in a community increases the risk of attacks not only on other animals but also on people. Children are especially at risk, because their small size may cause a fighting dog to perceive a child as another animal.

The cruelty inherent in dogfighting should be punished by more than a slap on the hand. Dogfighting is not a spur-of-the-moment act; it is a premeditated and cruel practice.

I urge you to take animal fighting crimes seriously. I consider dog fighting to be one of the most serious forms of animal abuse, not only for the violence that the dogs endure during and after the fights, but because of the suffering they often endure in training.

Although it was a crucial part of humans' survival 100,000 years ago, **hunting** is now nothing more than a violent form of recreation.

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Hunting has contributed to the extinction of animal species all over the world, including the Tasmanian tiger and the great auk (Grant Holloway, "Cloning to Revive Extinct Species," CNN.com, 28 May 2002; Canadian Museum of Nature, "Great Auk," 2003).

Many animals suffer prolonged, painful deaths when they are injured but not killed by hunters. Hunting disrupts migration and hibernation patterns and destroys families. For animals like wolves, who mate for life and live in close-knit family units, hunting can devastate entire communities. The stress that hunted animals suffer—caused by fear and the inescapable loud noises and other commotion that hunters create—also severely compromises their normal eating habits, making it hard for them to store the fat and energy that they need in order to survive the winter. The delicate balance of ecosystems ensures their own survival—if they are left unaltered. Natural predators help maintain this balance by killing only the sickest and weakest individuals. Hunters, however, kill any animal whom they would like to hang over the fireplace—including large, healthy animals who are needed to keep the population strong. Even when unusual natural occurrences cause overpopulation, natural processes work to stabilize the group. Starvation and disease can be tragic, but they are nature's ways of ensuring that healthy, strong animals survive and maintain the strength level of the rest of their herd or group. Shooting an animal because he or she might starve or become sick is arbitrary and destructive. I encourage you to enforce wildlife-protection laws. Nonhunters have to be equally represented on the staffs of wildlife agencies.

As shown at <http://action4animals.bravehost.com/> animals at **Belgrade zoo** need help. I have seen a great number of photographs of the zoo, and I have heard eyewitness accounts of the state of the animals. The enclosures in which the animals are housed are substandard. Instead of attempting to mimic the natural surroundings of each animal, bare cages, cement, and dirt are all that can be seen.

An Oxford University study based on four decades of observing animals in captivity and in the wild, found that animals such as polar bears, lions, tigers, and cheetahs "show the most evidence of stress and/or psychological dysfunction in captivity" and concluded that "the keeping of naturally wide-ranging carnivores should be either fundamentally improved or phased out" (Mark Derr, "Big Beasts, Tight Space and a Call for Change in Journal Report," The New York Times 2 Oct. 2003, Ros Clubb and Georgia Mason, "Captivity Effects on Wide-Ranging Carnivores," Nature 2 Oct. 2003).

Natural hunting and mating behaviors are virtually eliminated by regulated feeding and breeding regimens. Animals are closely confined, lack privacy, and have little opportunity for mental stimulation or physical exercise. These conditions often result in abnormal and self-destructive behaviors, also known as "zoochosis". These frustrated animals spend much of their time pacing, walking in tight circles, swaying or rolling their heads, and showing other signs of psychological distress.



**This bear is desperate, unhappy, depressed, closed in a very small dirty, stinking, concrete floored cage**

In the English the word "kinky" means "perverse". This bear isn't kinky, he is desperate, unhappy, depressed. Kinky the Bear and all the other animals in Belgrade zoo cannot talk. But, doesn't this picture say more than a thousand words?

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I read that Independent Serbian Activists, Young Artists, and one of Belgrade's animal welfare organization held protest against the international **circus** "Moskva" on June 03, 2007, Belgrade. **Circuses** would quickly lose their appeal if more people knew about the cruel methods used to train the animals; the cramped confinement, unacceptable travel conditions, and poor treatment that they endure; and what happens to them when they "retire".

Climatically, the circus environment is quite different from the animals' natural habitats, and temperature extremes cause misery and sometimes death.

Animals in the circus aren't there because they want to be, and they don't perform because they enjoy it. Animals do not naturally ride bicycles, stand on their heads, balance on balls, or jump through rings of fire. To force them to perform these confusing and physically uncomfortable tricks, trainers use whips, tight collars, muzzles, electric prods, bullhooks, and other painful tools of the trade. Animals in the circus are taken from their families and deprived of all the things that they would experience in their natural habitats.

As more people become aware of the cruelty involved in forcing animals to perform, circuses that use animals are finding fewer places to set up their big tops.

The use of animals in entertainment has already been restricted or banned in several U.S. localities—such as South Carolina and Orange County and Pasadena, California—as well as in cities around the world, like New Delhi, Belfast, and Rio de Janeiro. The council of the Chester-le-Street district in the U.K. banned events in which animals perform as "a relic of a bygone era" ("Circuses Face New Ban" *The Journal* (U.K.), 27 Nov. 2000).

You can help put a stop to the cruelty that thousands of animals suffer every single day.

Please, don't patronize circuses that use animals. Watching animals perform unnatural tricks only teaches our children that it is acceptable to exploit animals; it does not teach respect for animals, nor does it help animals in the wild. **Animal-free circuses and entertainment**, such as Cole Brothers Circus and Cirque du Soleil, are growing as the use of animals becomes recognized as archaic, unsafe and inhumane.

**Experimentation on animals** in laboratories generally falls into one of three categories—toxicity testing, education and training, and basic or applied research. It is a common misconception that most tests on animals are carried out with the aim of finding a cure for cancer, AIDS, or other devastating human diseases.

Surveys clearly show that the public accepts animal experimentation only because it is believed to be necessary for medical progress ("Attitudes Towards Experimentation on Live Animals—Toplines," MORI, 2004).

The reality is that much of this research is little more than curiosity-driven cruelty. Each year, around the world, millions of birds, cats, dogs, farmed animals, fish, mice, monkeys, rats, rabbits, and other domestic and wild animals are subjected to a wide variety of experiments in the name of biology, psychology, biochemistry, physiology, genetic manipulation, and bio-warfare.

The growing trend toward curiosity-driven research is largely a product of today's "publish or perish" research environment, in which scientists are recognized for the *number of research papers they publish rather than the contribution that each study makes to the advancement of science or medicine*.

Diseases that are artificially induced in animals in a laboratory are never identical to those that occur naturally in human beings. And because animal species differ from one another in many biologically significant ways, it becomes even more unlikely that animal research will yield results that will be correctly interpreted and applied to the human condition in a meaningful way. The fact that the species most often used in laboratory experiments are chosen largely for nonscientific reasons, such as cost and ease of handling, casts further doubt on the validity of this research.

A careful scientific review of 10 randomly chosen "animal models" of human disease found that they made little, if any, contribution toward the treatment of human patients (Christopher Anderegg, M.D., et al., "A Critical Look at Animal Experimentation," Medical Research Modernization Committee, 2002).

Human clinical, population, and in vitro studies are critical to the advancement of medicine. Besides saving countless animal lives, alternatives to animal tests are efficient and reliable. Unlike crude, archaic animal tests, non-animal methods usually take less time to complete, cost only a fraction of what the animal experiments they replace cost, and are not plagued with species differences that make extrapolation difficult or impossible.

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Effective, affordable, and humane research methods include studies of human populations, volunteers, and patients, as well as sophisticated in vitro, genomic, and computer-modeling techniques.

**Non-animal tests** are generally faster and less expensive than the animal tests they replace and improve upon. Animal experimenters face the ultimate dilemma, knowing that their artificially created “animal model” can never fully reflect the human condition; clinical investigators know that the results of their work are directly relevant to people.

The majority of medical schools, in the United States, including Harvard, Stanford, and Yale, have replaced their use of live animals in physiology, pharmacology, and/or surgical-training exercises with humane and effective non-animal teaching methods, including observation of actual human cardiac bypass surgery, patient simulators, sophisticated computer programs, and more. In addition to being more humane, non-animal teaching tools such as computer simulations, multimedia CD-ROMs, and models are also more economical than traditional animal-based teaching exercises.

Several Web sites provide descriptions, prices, and ordering information for thousands of alternative learning materials. Following are two excellent databases that focus specifically on alternatives in education:

- The Association of Veterinarians for Animal Rights (AVAR) <http://www.avar.org>
- Norwegian Inventory of Audiovisuals (NORINA) <http://oslovet.veths.no/NORINA/search.html>

Cruel acts toward animals have long been recognized as indicators of a dangerous **psychopathy** that often claims more than animal victims. “Murderers ... very often start out by killing and torturing animals as kids,” according to Robert K. Ressler, who developed profiles of serial killers for the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) (Daniel Goleman, “Experts See Parallels Between Dahmer, Previous Serial Killers,” New York Times News Service, 11 Aug. 1991).

Acts of cruelty to animals are not mere indications of a minor personality flaw in the abuser; they are symptomatic of a deep mental disturbance. Research in psychology and criminology shows that people who commit acts of cruelty to animals don’t stop there—many of them move on to their fellow humans. Communities and courts that shrug off cruelty to animals as a “minor” crime are ignoring a time bomb. Instead, courts should aggressively penalize animal abusers, examine families for other signs of violence, and order perpetrators to undergo psychological evaluations and counseling. Communities must recognize that abuse to any living individual is unacceptable and endangers everyone.

Parents who neglect or abuse an animal frequently subject their own children to similar hardships. Indiana residents Jade M. Jonas and Michael R. Smith faced felony charges stemming from authorities’ reported discovery of their two children and three dogs languishing in their filthy home. According to news sources, officials first found a tethered dog deprived of food and water outside the home. Upon entering the couple’s residence, investigators reportedly found a 3-month-old boy lying near piles of feces, trash, and rotten food; a half-clothed toddler; and two additional dogs (“Police Remove Children From Filthy House,” Associated Press, 17 Jun. 2005).

Don’t ignore even minor acts of cruelty **to animals by children**. Because abusers target the powerless, crimes against animals, children, and the elderly often go hand in hand. Children who abuse animals may be repeating a lesson learned at home; like their parents, they are reacting to anger or frustration with violence. Their violence is directed at the only individual in the family more vulnerable than themselves: an animal. I urge law enforcement agencies, prosecutors, and judges to take cruelty to animals seriously. Those charged with protecting the communities and animals must send a strong message that violence against any sentient creature —human or nonhuman— is unacceptable.

"ARKA" society for the protection and welfare of animals from Novi Sad, and society friends of animals "FRIEND" from Subotica, have many documents and photographs which are proving the violation of article 269 in a *different animal issues* like: stray dogs and cats, transport of animals, animal markets, farm animals, wild animals, performing animals, etc.



During this long campaign, I have met many wonderful people that work for the animals, only to name a few:

- **Animal friends Friend-EPAR, Subotica;**
- **Animal Protection Society "NIS", Nis town;**
- **Animal Protection Society "ZOV", Sombor City;**
- **Animal Protection Society "SRECKO", Negotin City;**
- **Vegan Portal, Belgrade;**
- **APS CEIRI, Nis town.**

Please, help and support their daily activity for the animals. They are real angels for the animals, people who give hope to the voiceless. These people show to the whole world that Serbia can have a big heart for the animals. You have to be proud of this and support their efforts to give a better future to our friends, the Animals.

I am not here to judge, I know that every country has got its problems related to animal welfare, I only ask you: Please, stop stop killing and suffering of animals in Serbia.

There are so many wonderful people, please work in conjunction with them.

*Sincerely,*

**Paola Ghidotti - OIPA International Campaigns Director**

[www.oipa.org](http://www.oipa.org)

*This Letter is endorsed by:*

**Massimo Comparotto – OIPA ITALIA Chairman**

**Massimo Pradella – OIPA INTERNATIONAL Chairman**

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