President of Human Rights Council appoints Members of Commission of Inquiry on the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and Israel

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The President of the Human Rights Council, Ambassador Nazhat Shameem Khan (Fiji), today announced the appointment of Navi Pillay (South Africa), Miloon Kothari (India) and Chris Sidoti (Australia) to serve as the three members of the Commission of Inquiry on the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and Israel.  Ms Pillay will serve as Chair of the three-person Commission.

Through its [**resolution**](https://undocs.org/A/HRC/RES/S-30/1) of 27 May 2021, adopted at its emergency special session, the Human Rights Council decided “to urgently establish an ongoing independent, international commission of inquiry, to be appointed by the President of the Human Rights Council, to investigate in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and in Israel all alleged violations of international humanitarian law and all alleged violations and abuses of international human rights law leading up to and since 13 April 2021”.

The three-person Commission was also tasked with investigating “all underlying root causes of recurrent tensions, instability and protraction of conflict, including systematic discrimination and repression based on national, ethnic, racial or religious identity”.

Through the same resolution, the 47-member body mandated the Commission to "establish the facts and circumstances that may amount to such violations and abuses and of crimes perpetrated" and "identify, where possible, those responsible, with a view to ensuring that perpetrators of violations are held accountable".

The Commissioners, who will serve in their personal capacities, were also requested by the Council to “identify patterns of violations over time by analysing the similarities in the findings and recommendations of all United Nations fact-finding missions and commissions of inquiry on the situation".

The Commission was requested to report on its main activities on an annual basis to the Human Rights Council as from June 2022.  It is scheduled to present its first report to the Human Rights Council at its 50th session in June 2022.

[**Biographies of the members of the Commission of Inquiry**](https://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/HRC/CoIOPT-Israel/Pages/Commissioners.aspx)

**Navi Pillay** (South Africa) served as UN High Commissioner for Human Rights from 2008 to 2014.  She is currently serving as Judge Ad Hoc of the International Court of Justice in the Application of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (The Gambia v Myanmar).  She is also the President of the International Commission Against the Death Penalty based in Madrid, the President of the Advisory Council of the International Nuremburg Principles Academy and the Chair of the Quasi-Judicial Inquiry into Detention in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.  In 1995, after the end of apartheid, Pillay was appointed acting judge on the South African High Court, and in the same year was elected by the UN General Assembly to be judge on the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, where she served a total of eight years (1999-2003), the last four as President.  In 2003, she was appointed as a judge on the International Criminal Court in The Hague, where she served on the Appeals Chamber until 2008.  Ms Pillay was the first woman to start a law practice in her home province of Natal in 1967 and acted as a defence lawyer for anti-apartheid activists, exposing torture, and helping establish rights for prisoners on Robben Island.

**Miloon Kothari** (India) served as the first UN Special Rapporteur on adequate housing (2000-2008).  He has published widely on issues such as the Human Rights Council’s Universal Periodic Review (UPR), housing and land rights, gender, forced evictions, globalization and its impact on human rights and the environment, civil society and trade.  He regularly advises governments, UN agencies, research organizations and international and national civil society organizations on the human rights system, the UPR, as well as other human rights issues.  He is the founding member of the Working Group on Human Rights in India and the UN – an Indian human rights coalition focussing on the UPR – and was the convenor from 2009 to 2014.  He is also President of UPR Info, since 2015.  An architect by training, Mr Kothari has been a Guest Professor and Visiting Scholar to numerous universities and institutions, including the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.  Since February 2021, he has been a Visiting Professor at the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies in Geneva.

**Chris Sidoti** (Australia) is an international human rights consultant and an expert in national human rights institutions and in international human rights law and mechanisms.  Since February 2021, he is the founder and an International Expert of the Special Advisory Council for Myanmar.  From 2017 to 2019, he served as one of the Members of the UN Independent International Fact Finding Mission on Myanmar.  Since 2000, he has provided consultancy services on human rights law and practices to the OHCHR, UNDP, UNICEF, the Asia-Pacific Forum of National Human Rights Institutions and several national human rights institutions.  Sidoti also holds a number of academic positions.  He was Executive Director of the International Service for Human Rights (ISHR; 2003-2007), served as Australian Human Rights Commissioner (1995-2000), Australian Law Reform Commissioner (1992-1995), and Founding Director of the Australian Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission (1987-1992).  From 1999 to 2013 he was principal facilitator and interlocutor in a human rights initiative between the Governments of Australia and Myanmar.