

Dianne Lob
Chair



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of Major American Jewish Organizations

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Jewish Women

July 29, 2022

His Excellency Mr. António Manuel de Oliveira Guterres
Secretary-General
United Nations
New York, New York 10017

Your Excellency:

On behalf of the Conference of Presidents of Major Jewish Organizations and other major Jewish organizations, we write to express outrage over remarks made by Mr. Miloon Kothari in an interview with the anti-Israel media outlet Mondoweiss. As you know, Mr. Kothari is a member of the Commission of Inquiry established by the Human Rights Council following the hostilities between Israel and the terrorist organization Hamas in May 2021.

In the interview, which was replete with expressions of bias, Mr. Kothari said: "I would go as far as to raise the question of why Israel is even a member of the United Nations." Using an all too familiar antisemitic diatribe, he also said: "We are very disheartened by the social media that is controlled largely by whether it's the Jewish lobby or whether it's by specific NGOs, a lot of money is being thrown in to trying to discredit us." (In the last session of the Human Rights Council, another member of the Commission, Christopher Sidoti, dismissed charges about antisemitism saying, "It seems that accusations of antisemitism are thrown like rice at a wedding.")

When Mr. Kothari was appointed as a member of the Commission, we questioned his suitability for the job. We recalled that he was the subject of a formal complaint to the OHCHR, given his violation of UN regulations and ethical standards when carrying out an unauthorized official visit to Israel as Special Rapporteur for Housing, which he had presented as a private academic visit.

The OHCHR rules and guidance on commissions of inquiry and fact-finding missions clearly state that "members [of such commissions and missions] should, in all cases, have a proven record of independence and impartiality. It is also important to ensure that the background of candidates, prior public statements or political or other affiliations, do not affect their independence or impartiality, or create perception of bias."

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 Mercaz USA,
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 the Conservative
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 NA'AMAT USA
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 Jewish Women
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 NCSEJ - National
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 Eurasian Jewry
 ORT America, Inc.
 Rabbinical Assembly
 Rabbinical Council of
 America
 Religious Zionists of
 America
 UJA-Federation of New
 York
 Union for Reform
 Judaism
 Union of Orthodox
 Jewish
 Congregations of
 America
 United Synagogue of
 Conservative Judaism
 WIZO
 Women of Reform
 Judaism
 Women's League for
 Conservative Judaism
 Workers Circle
 World ORT USA
 World Zionist Executive,
 USA
 Zionist Organization of
 America

Regrettably, the Human Rights Council's President last year appointed three members of the Commission who fail to meet these fundamental requirements of independence and impartiality. Navi Pillay, Miloon Kothari and Christopher Dominic Sidoti each have made public statements and engaged in activities that reflect a preexisting and biased view of Israel. The composition of the Commission effectively guarantees that its resulting reports will lack credibility.

Since the UN General Assembly admitted Israel as a member state, there have been numerous attempts to deprive it of this membership. It is sad, indeed tragic, that seventy-seven years after the establishment of the UN on the ashes of the Holocaust, the UN has become a center for attempts to undermine the very existence of the Jewish state.

In our letter dated February 7, 2022, we urged you to use your authority to ensure that the Commission of Inquiry does not present reports that will unfairly criticize Israel, the only democracy in the Middle East. In view of the recent comments made by Mr. Kothari, and the other Commission members, we call on you to go even further and help disband this harmful body.

Respectfully,

Dianne Lob
 Chair

William C. Daroff
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 Vice Chair

American Israel Public Affairs
 Committee

Hadassah, Women's Zionist
 Organization of America

American Jewish Committee

Jewish Council for Public Affairs

American Jewish Congress

Jewish Federations of North America

Anti-Defamation League

Simon Wiesenthal Center

B'nai B'rith International

StandWithUs

Committee for Accuracy in Middle
 East Reporting and Analysis

World Jewish Congress - North America



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