Bipartisan Group Calls For Biased United Nations Commission To Be Disbanded Following Antisemitic Remarks

August 12, 2022

Office of Congressman Brad Schneider

<https://schneider.house.gov/media/press-releases/bipartisan-group-calls-biased-united-nations-commission-be-disbanded-following>

 A bipartisan group of 34 Members of Congress — led by Representatives Brad Schneider (IL-10), Josh Gottheimer (NJ-5), Andrew Garbarino (NY-2), and Cathy McMorris Rodgers (WA-5) — wrote to the United Nations to sound the alarm on the recent antisemitic remarks from United Nations Commission of Inquiry (COI) into Israel member Miloon Kothari. Their letter highlighted the imbalance and prejudgment of the United Nations COI, and pushed for the immediate removal of Mr. Kothari from his position on the commission, for the Commission of Inquiry to be disbanded, and for definitive action to be taken against antisemitism at the United Nations.

“We were deeply disappointed last year at the formation of this unprecedented, open-ended, and biased COI to investigate Israel which completely ignores the role of terrorist groups such as Hamas in the protraction of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. At the time we viewed the creation of this commission as another attempt by the United Nations Human Rights Council to unjustifiably target Israel and feel even stronger about this assessment today,” the Members of Congress wrote in a letter to the UN Secretary-General and the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights. “Mr. Kothari’s comments, reflecting both an abhorrent, deep-seated antisemitism and a rejection of the very legitimacy of the State of Israel, warrant universal condemnation. These comments should have no place at the United Nations and clearly demonstrate the lack of impartiality and disproportionate focus on Israel by the COI.”

The Members continued, “We strongly urge you to take definitive action to make clear that antisemitism has no place within the United Nations system and call on you to help disband the Commission of Inquiry into Israel. In doing this, we hope you will instead prioritize meaningful and balanced efforts to bring both Israelis and Palestinians together to ensure peace and prosperity for all.”

The letter is signed by a bipartisan group of 34 Members of Congress, including Reps. Schneider (D-IL), Garbarino (R-NY), Gottheimer (D-NJ), McMorris Rodgers (R-WA), Hinson (R-IA), Sherman (D-CA), Gimenez (R-FL), Fleischmann (R-TN), Crist (D-FL), Pappas (D-NH), Tenney (R-NY), Trone (D-MD), Joyce (R-OH), Lesko (R-AZ), Wasserman Schultz (D-FL), Titus (D-NV), Luria (D-VA), Pallone, Jr. (D-NJ), Meng (D-NY), Auchincloss (D-MA), Golden (D-ME), Katko (R-NY), Manning (D-NC), Schrier (D-WA), Zeldin (R-NY), Frankel (D-FL), Waltz (R-FL), Malliotakis (R-NY), Murphy (D-FL), Wild (D-PA), Lee (D-NV), Deutch (D-FL), O'Halleran (D-AZ), and Gonzalez (D-TX).

Full text of the letter can be found [here](https://gottheimer.house.gov/uploadedfiles/us_house_of_rep__u.n._coi_israel_letter.pdf) and below:

His Excellency Mr. António Manuel de Oliveira Guterres

Secretary-General

United Nations

760 United Nations Plaza

New York, NY 10017

Her Excellency Ms. Michelle Bachelet

United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

Palais Wilson

52 rue des Pâquis

CH-1202 Geneva, Switzerland

Dear Secretary-General Guterres and High Commissioner Bachelet:

We are writing to bring to your attention the recent antisemitic comments by Miloon Kothari, a member of the United Nations Commission of Inquiry (COI) into Israel. These outrageous and prejudicial remarks not only disqualify Mr. Kothari personally, but show the imbalance and prejudgment of the U.N.’s COI, which has been apparent since its formation last year. Given this, we are calling on you to help disband the Commission of Inquiry. Pending that decision, Mr. Kothari should be immediately removed from his position on this commission.

We were deeply disappointed last year at the formation of this unprecedented, open-ended, and biased COI to investigate Israel which completely ignores the role of terrorist groups such as Hamas in the protraction of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. At the time we viewed the creation of this commission as another attempt by the United Nations Human Rights Council to unjustifiably target Israel and feel even stronger about this assessment today.

Mr. Kothari’s comments, reflecting both an abhorrent, deep-seated antisemitism and a rejection of the very legitimacy of the State of Israel, warrant universal condemnation. These comments should have no place at the United Nations and clearly demonstrate the lack of impartiality and disproportionate focus on Israel by the COI.

We strongly urge you to take definitive action to make clear that antisemitism has no place within the United Nations system and call on you to help disband the Commission of Inquiry into Israel. In doing this, we hope you will instead prioritize meaningful and balanced efforts to bring both Israelis and Palestinians together to ensure peace and prosperity for all.

Sincerely,

MEMBERS OF CONGRESS