



His Excellency Amb. Federico Villegas
President of the Human Rights Council
Palais de Nations - Geneva

Geneva, 29 July 2022

Dear Mr. President,

I am writing in response to the letter sent by Ms. Navi Pillay, the Chair Commissioner of the COI targeting Israel, addressed to you on the 28 July. It was with much indignation and astonishment that I read her response, which doubled down on the Commission's clear support for antisemitic comments made by Mr. Kothari. As such, I see no possible way for any of the three Commissioners to carry on their roles in an effective manner, and as such, call on all three of them to resign immediately.

This issue comes down to one simple question, is the term "*the Jewish Lobby*" antisemitic? Even in the context Ms. Pillay claims, that Mr. Kothari was discussing governments and NGOs' attempts to discredit them, both Mr. Kothari and now Ms. Pillay seem to place the blame for this on an imaginary "*Jewish lobby*", an age-old antisemitic trope.

Ms. Pillay goes on to highlight the Commission's "*position in the clearest terms on antisemitism*" by using a quote that claims that accusations of antisemitism are "*thrown around like rice at a wedding*". This in itself is an insidious claim. At best, it highlights they do not take the issue seriously. At worst, they simply seek to use this quote to absolve themselves from any charge of antisemitism, no matter how serious or obvious it can be.

Ms. Pillay's claim that we took other comments out of context are false and I urge you to listen for yourself to Mr. Kothari's interview¹. The letter's claim that "the Commission does not question the status or United Nations membership of either of the concerned states of its mandate", is simply not true. In the interview on the 25 July, Mr. Kothari said "***I would go as far as to raise the question as***

¹ <https://mondoweiss.net/2022/07/apartheid-is-not-sufficient-an-interview-with-un-human-rights-commissioner-miloon-kothari/>

why are they even a member of the United Nations, because they don't respect — the Israeli government does not respect — its own obligations as a UN member state”.

It is time for the United Nations to take action; it is time to disband this Commission. In my previous letter, I said that Mr. Kothari's remarks were a disgrace and a stain on the credibility of the whole United Nations system. The letter by Ms. Pillay is much worse. It is the defense of the indefensible. She has endorsed antisemitism. She has brought shame to the whole institution. I expect you to take all necessary measures at your disposal to call for Ms. Pillay, and the other Commissioners, to resign.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'Meirav Eilon Shaha', with a stylized, overlapping structure.

Meirav Eilon Shaha
Ambassador
Permanent Representative