



ED SNIDER SOCIAL ACTION INSTITUTE

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Ambassador Linda Thomas-Greenfield
US Mission to The United Nations
799 United Nations Plaza
New York, NY 10017

Dear Ambassador Thomas-Greenfield,

We write on behalf of the Simon Wiesenthal Center, one of the largest international Jewish human rights organizations with over 400,000 member families in the United States. We are an accredited NGO at the United Nations, UNESCO, the OSCE, the OAS, and the Council of Europe.

We write to express our grave concerns about the heinous, unacceptable statements by UN Human Rights Council Commissioner Miloon Kothari. Not only has he now falsely accused Israel of “apartheid,” <https://mondoweiss.net/2022/07/apartheid-is-not-sufficient-an-interview-with-un-human-rights-commissioner-miloon-kothari/>, but even more egregious is Mr. Kothari’s questioning the legitimacy of Israel to exist as a member of the United Nations.

Mr. Kothari said, “I would go as far as to raise the question of why [Israel is] even a member of the United Nations. Because ... the Israeli government does not respect its own obligations as a UN member state. They, in fact, consistently, either directly or through the United States, try to undermine UN mechanisms.”

Mr. Kothari has given full-throated support to the biased, untruthful Human Rights Council’s “**Independent International Commission of Inquiry (COI) on the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and Israel**”, also known as the Pillay Commission.

We take note that this extremist in diplomatic clothing intends to meet with United States Members of Congress in the coming days.

As you know this unprecedented UNHRC commission—open-ended and unprecedented in scope, is funded with millions of dollars and 18 staff members with the sole objective to investigate, demonize and prosecute the State of Israel in perpetuity – a threat, no other nation on earth is facing.

For his part, Mr. Kothari has already falsely labeled Israel an apartheid state and promises that the Pillay Commission “will get to the apartheid question, at some point in the future; gather “forensic data for submission to the International Criminal Court and International Court of Justice,” “and then, at a particular time, hand it over to the judicial bodies that can take action.”

Mr. Kothari is also engaging in overt anti-Semitism, claiming the “Jewish lobby” controls social media.

The Jerusalem Post reported this quote: “We are very disheartened by the social media that is controlled largely by – whether it is the Jewish lobby or specific NGOs,” said Indian human-rights expert Miloon Kothari.” <https://www.jpost.com/israel-news/article-713126>

And there’s more:

In October 2021, the Israeli ambassador to the United Nations in Geneva, sent a protest to the then-President of the Human Rights Council, in which she complained that the appointment of Navi Pillay, Christopher Sidoti and Miloon Kothari, the three members of COI, violated the rules and guidance of the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) on commissions of inquiry and fact-finding missions.

By these rules and guidance, “members [of such commissions and missions] should, in all cases, have a proven record of independence and impartiality.” “There can simply be no doubt,” the Letter said, “that these members are tainted by bias, let alone the perception of bias, and cannot conceivably be regarded as independent and impartial.”

Of Mr. Kothari, the Israeli letter added: “Mr. Kothari is also 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.”

Mr. Kothari’s history of misrepresentation to customs officials about whether the purpose of his visits to foreign countries is also cited here: <https://www.un.org/unispal/document/auto-insert-188268/>

Madam Ambassador, this COI is a poison pill against peace and against US goals that will embolden violence, terrorism, and anti-Semitism. We urge that you publicly denounce Kothari’s libelous statements, false accusations, and anti-Jewish remarks against America’s ally, Israel, and the Jewish people.



The Simon Wiesenthal Center also requests that the Administration voice full support for proposed bipartisan legislation in Congress to eliminate the anti-Israel Commission of Inquiry.

We know that the United States rejoined the UN Human Rights Council with the hope of bringing about positive change from within. But the UNHRC 's ill-conceived COI and its continuous anti-Israel resolutions call for firm action by the US: Demand the defunding of the COI and that the UNHRC stop targeting the Jewish state and instead confront to human rights outrages generated by China, Russia, Iran, just to name a few of the worst human rights violators, be held accountable by the Council. If that cannot goal cannot be met, the US and other democracies should leave the UNHRC.

We would welcome an early opportunity to discuss these issues with you.

Sincerely,

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*For identification purposes only. Not writing on USCIRF's behalf