

January 1, 2018

H.E. Vojislav Šuc,
President, Human Rights Council
c/o Permanent Mission of Slovenia to the UN
Rue de Vermont 37-39
1202 Geneva Switzerland

Your Excellency:

We write to you in your capacity as President of the Human Rights Council in Geneva, to express our serious concerns regarding the situation in the Council. As President, you have emphasized the need to enhance the effectiveness of the Council. We concur, but wish to stress that the achievement of such an improvement depends on the Council's credibility, which, unfortunately, remains in doubt.

As you know, the Human Rights Council was created by the General Assembly in 2006 to replace the Commission on Human Rights, an organ discredited by partisanship, corruption and lack of professionalism. Regrettably, the Council has not lived up to its original promise. Members of the Council were supposed to be elected based on their human rights records, yet it includes persistent violators of such rights. It was expected to objectively and non-selectively promote and protect human rights worldwide, but it has ignored some of the world's worst abusers while repeatedly singling out and censuring one country – Israel.

Nowhere is the Council's anti-Israel bias more evident than in agenda Item 7, which condemns Israel to permanent indictment. Israel is the only country subjected to a separate, stand-alone agenda item, whereas the human rights violations of all the other countries are considered under one single agenda item (agenda Item 4).

Every year, the Council adopts at least five resolutions condemning Israel for alleged violations, while other countries scrutinized by the Council are normally subjected to one annual resolution only. Furthermore, the Council has appointed an outside expert as "Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian territories occupied since 1967," the only international conflict for which the Council has required reporting on the conduct of only one side to the conflict.

General Assembly Resolution A/60/251 stated that "the Council shall be responsible for promoting universal respect for the protection of all human rights and fundamental freedoms for all, without distinction of any kind and in a fair and equal manner." Unless this provision is fully upheld, the Council will continue to lack credibility, to the detriment of promoting universal adherence to human rights. We call upon you to take immediate measures to alter the singularly biased treatment of Israel. The first such measure should be the elimination of agenda Item 7, which illustrates Israel's treatment as "separate and not equal."

Respectfully,