

H.E. Michelle Bachelet  
High Commissioner for Human Rights  
Palais des Nations  
1211 Geneva 10

28 June 2022

Dear Madam High Commissioner,

We wish to call your attention to a matter of grave concern. For the first time in the history of the Human Rights Council, your Secretariat has denied our non-governmental organization the right to speak in any of the 36 Interactive Dialogues (IDs).

As you know, in the current 50<sup>th</sup> session of the Council, there are no General Debates, with oral statements possible only for the first 10 NGO speakers registered in IDs.

Mr. Eric Tistounet, chief of the Secretariat, has previously indicated that NGO speaker lists are “automatically generated by the system, based on the requested priority, time of registration and the number of requests received.”

United Nations Watch registered as soon as the online system opened, on 9 June at 2:00 pm, and promptly requested 36 different IDs.

Astoundingly, however, we received *none* of these slots. This would be impossible barring human intervention with the automatically generated results. Please note that we have participated in every session of the Council since it was created in June 2006 and United Nations Watch would typically receive 10 to 20 speaking slots. This time: zero.

The evidence is compelling that we are being targeted by deliberate discrimination. We cannot help but note that this is occurring after we publicly supported a whistleblower from within your Secretariat whose story was just reported in a BBC documentary.

The numbers speak for themselves. One need only compare with other NGOs that have refused to support the whistleblower. The International Commission of Jurists received 8 requested IDs; the International Service for Human Rights received 8; Amnesty International received 9; Human Rights Watch received 9; CIVICUS received 10. We received 0.

We know of no legitimate explanation for the glaring disparate treatment demonstrated above, which is denying United Nations Watch the right to speak under any Interactive Dialogue in this current session.

Madam High Commissioner, before we make any public statement on this matter, we invite your Office to inform us if any such explanation exists.

We thank you for your urgent attention to this matter and look forward to your response.

Sincerely,



Dina Rovner  
Legal Advisor

CC: Ambassador Lotte Knudsen, Mission of the European Union  
Ambassador Leslie Norton, Mission of Canada  
Ambassador Amanda Gorely, Mission of Australia  
Ambassador Michelle Taylor, Mission of United States  
Ambassador Jürg Lauber, Mission of Switzerland  
Ambassador Federico Villegas, President of Human Rights Council