

RANDY HULTGREN, Illinois
Co-Chairman



JAMES P. MCGOVERN, Massachusetts
Co-Chairman

One Hundred and Fifteenth Congress
Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission

June 14, 2017

President Donald J. Trump
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

We write today as Co-Chairs of the bi-partisan Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission to encourage continued United States membership and engagement in the United Nations Human Rights Council.

We recognize and are deeply concerned by the Council's inconsistency with regard to its defense and promotion of human rights on several fronts. These include a disproportionate targeting of Israel and the election to the Council of countries that are serious violators of human rights.

However, we view these weaknesses as opportunities for the United States to strengthen from within the Council's ability to promote and defend human rights. Our government should lead our allies in holding Council members accountable for gross violations of human rights, and when necessary convene special sessions addressing abuses. We must create a deliberative discourse within the Council that forces nations to look at their own human rights record with objective scrutiny, which will then better qualify them to defend or decry the actions of other countries. Similarly, we have a responsibility to persuade governments with strong human rights records to serve on the Council in order to boost its credibility.

The Council is most effective when it is able to put human rights ahead of politics. It actively advances human rights around the world in many different ways. These include advocating for prisoners of conscience in the international arena, convening emergency sessions to address war crimes, and shining a spotlight on human rights abuses in countries by establishing commissions of inquiry. This important work needs to continue with the involvement of the United States.

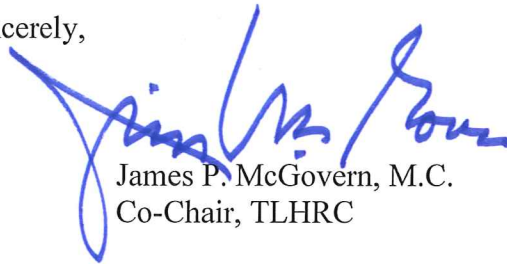
We urge you to consider the vital role the United States has to strengthen the mandate of the Council. This body is entrusted by the nations of the world with the responsibility to protect

and promote human rights. Engagement on the Council remains our best path forward to safeguarding human rights, peace, and security for both American citizens and those across the globe. Thank you for your careful consideration of this matter.



Randy Hultgren, M.C.
Co-Chair, TLHRC

Sincerely,



James P. McGovern, M.C.
Co-Chair, TLHRC

Cc: The Honorable Rex Tillerson, Secretary of State
The Honorable Nikki Haley, U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations
The Honorable H. R. McMaster, U.S. National Security Advisor