

Vojislav Šuc  
President, Human Rights Council  
United Nations  
Palais des Nations  
CH-1211 Geneva 10

20 March 2018

Excellency,

We call your attention to a grave incident of Chinese government reprisal, harassment and intimidation against one of our delegates, which took place today both inside and outside the chamber of the Human Rights Council.

United Nations Watch delegate Dr. Yang Jianli, an eminent Chinese human rights activist and former political prisoner, delivered a speech on human rights in China at approximately 3:00 pm, under Agenda Item 8. Shortly before, at approximately 2:30 pm, Dr. Yang was sitting outside the chamber with a fellow Chinese activist when he observed an individual photographing them with a smartphone device for approximately 10 minutes, with the clear intention of intimidation and harassment. When Dr. Yang entered the chamber, he identified the harasser as Mr. Wei Zhimin, who was sitting with the Chinese delegation.

Then, close to 3:00 pm, just before Dr. Yang delivered his speech, another member of the Chinese delegation approached him closely from behind, looking over his shoulder and spying on him for several minutes.

We consider these incidents to be acts of deliberate intimidation in reprisal against our delegate for his cooperation with the United Nations human rights mechanisms.

We note that this not the first time that one of our delegates has been intimidated by China's UNHRC delegates. In March 2014, as [reported](#) in the New York Times, our delegate Ms. Ti-Anna Wang was subjected to similar intimidation by an accredited NGO, the "China Association for Preservation and Development of Tibetan Culture," which is a front of the Chinese government. China is known to systematically intimidate and harass Chinese human rights defenders at the United Nations.<sup>1</sup>

As President of the HRC, you are obliged to protect human rights defenders who participate in Council sessions from such reprisal actions. Accordingly, we demand that Chinese delegate Mr. Wei Zhimin have his credentials permanently removed, and that you issue a statement in the plenary rebuking China for its

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<sup>1</sup> "UN: China Blocks Activists, Harasses Experts," *Human Rights Watch*, Sep. 5, 2017, available at <https://www.hrw.org/news/2017/09/05/un-china-blocks-activists-harasses-experts>; Sui-Lee Wee and Stephanie Nebehay, "At U.N., China uses intimidation tactics to silence its critics," *Reuters*, Oct. 6, 2015, available at <https://www.reuters.com/investigates/special-report/china-softpower-rights/>.

illegal conduct. Finally, we urge the HRC Bureau to report these incidents to the Secretary-General, the High Commissioner, and all other relevant UN mechanisms dealing with reprisals against human rights defenders.

Thank you for your attention to this grave matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Hillel C. Neuer', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Hillel C. Neuer  
Executive Director