

Acts of intimidation and reprisal for engaging with the United Nations on human rights

Intimidation and reprisals increasingly reported

In a context of shrinking space for civil society organizations in many parts of the world, the UN Human Rights Office is concerned about the increase in reported cases of intimidation and reprisals against people who engage directly with the UN on human rights issues. This can be for sharing information, submitting complaints to UN bodies and mechanisms, attending UN events or trainings, and other forms of participation with UN entities. Concerned about the increasing reports, the UN Secretary-General in October 2016 designated the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights, Andrew Gilmour, as senior official tasked to coordinate UN systemwide efforts to address and prevent intimidation and reprisals.

Which parts of the UN does this include?

Engagement with *all* UN organs, entities or agencies, *anywhere* in the world: UN headquarters, country offices and peacekeeping missions, General Assembly, Human Rights Council, Security Council, Economic and Social Council, International Criminal Court, International Labour Organization, World Bank/International Monetary Fund, UN meetings and conferences on trade, development and environment issues, etc.

Where to send information

Depending on the nature of the intimidation and reprisals experienced, various UN entities and mechanisms may be available to identify ways to assist on specific cases. Civil society organizations and victims can report incidents and risks to a *confidential* email address. The UN Human Rights Office in New York and Geneva monitors and ensures adequate follow-up to information received at this address: reprisals@ohchr.org

What information to include

- Describe how the situation is linked to the victim's cooperation with the UN.
- Describe the case: who? when? where? what? how? alleged perpetrator(s)? Any evidence or documentation?
- Does the victim or family member/legal representative consent to have the information shared with UN entities for potential action (use of information in a meeting with the Member State in question, letter, public report, etc.)?
- Have complaints been submitted to any national, regional or other international bodies?

Where to find out more

UN Human Rights Office webpage on intimidation and reprisals

<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/Reprisals/Pages/ReprisalsIndex.aspx>