



# General Assembly

Distr.: General  
23 July 2019

Original: English

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## Human Rights Council

### Forty-first session

24 June–12 July 2019

Agenda item 2

### Annual report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and reports of the Office of the High Commissioner and the Secretary-General

## Letter dated 8 July 2019 from the Permanent Representatives of Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Iceland, Ireland, Japan, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the United Nations Office at Geneva addressed to the President of the Human Rights Council

We, the undersigned, have the honour to transmit herewith a joint letter on behalf of the undersigned States (see annex).

We would be highly appreciative if you could kindly circulate the present letter and the annex thereto\* and record it as a document of the Human Rights Council, and to publish it on the website of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights.

*(Signed)* Sally **Mansfield**

Ambassador

Permanent Representative of Australia

*(Signed)* Elisabeth **Tichy-Fisslberger**

Ambassador

Permanent Representative of Austria

*(Signed)* Geert **Muyllé**

Ambassador

Permanent Representative of Belgium

*(Signed)* Rosemary **McCarney**

Ambassador

Permanent Representative of Canada

*(Signed)* Morten **Jespersen**

Ambassador

Permanent Representative of Denmark

*(Signed)* Andre **Pung**

Ambassador

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\* Reproduced as received, in the language of submission only.



Permanent Representative of Estonia

*(Signed)* Terhi **Hakala**  
Ambassador

Permanent Representative of Finland

*(Signed)* François **Rivasseau**  
Ambassador

Permanent Representative of France

*(Signed)* Michael **Freiherr von Ungern-Sternberg**  
Ambassador

Permanent Representative of Germany

*(Signed)* Harald **Aspelund**  
Ambassador

Permanent Representative of Iceland

*(Signed)* Michael **Gaffey**  
Ambassador

Permanent Representative of Ireland

*(Signed)* Junichi **Ihara**  
Ambassador

Permanent Representative of Japan

*(Signed)* Janis **Karklins**  
Ambassador

Permanent Representative of Latvia

*(Signed)* Andrius **Krivas**  
Ambassador

Permanent Representative of Lithuania

*(Signed)* Pierre-Louis **Lorenz**  
Ambassador

Permanent Representative of Luxembourg

*(Signed)* Monique **van Daalen**  
Ambassador

Permanent Representative of the Netherlands

*(Signed)* Jillian **Dempster**  
Ambassador

Permanent Representative of New Zealand

*(Signed)* Hans **Brattskar**  
Ambassador

Permanent Representative of Norway

*(Signed)* Cristóbal **González-Aller Jurado**  
Ambassador

Permanent Representative of Spain

*(Signed)* Veronika **Bard**  
Ambassador

Permanent Representative of Sweden

*(Signed)* Valentin **Zellweger**  
Ambassador

Permanent Representative of Switzerland

*(Signed)* Julian **Braithwaite**  
Ambassador

Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom of Great Britain  
and Northern Ireland

**Annex to the letter dated 8 July 2019 from the Permanent Representatives of Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Iceland, Ireland, Japan, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the United Nations Office at Geneva addressed to the President of the Human Rights Council**

Mr. President,

We, the co-signatories to this letter, are concerned about credible reports of arbitrary detention in large-scale places of detention, as well as widespread surveillance and restrictions, particularly targeting Uighurs and other minorities in Xinjiang, China.

We recall China's obligations as a member of the UN Human Rights Council to "uphold the highest standards in the promotion and protection of human rights and fully cooperate with the Council."

We recall the 2018 concluding observations of the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) in its review of China, which expressed concern about disturbing reports of large-scale arbitrary detentions of Uighurs, and other Muslim and minority communities. We also share concerns expressed by the High Commissioner for Human Rights and by several UN Special Procedures mandate holders in this regard.

We call on China to uphold its national laws and international obligations and to respect human rights and fundamental freedoms, including freedom of religion or belief, in Xinjiang and across China. We call also on China to refrain from the arbitrary detention and restrictions on freedom of movement of Uighurs, and other Muslim and minority communities in Xinjiang.

We welcome China's acceptance of a Universal Periodic Review recommendation to respond positively to a country visit request by the UN Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief and urge China to allow meaningful access to Xinjiang for independent international observers, including for the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights. We further call on China to implement the related recommendations in the concluding observations of CERD. We ask the High Commissioner for Human Rights to keep the Human Rights Council regularly informed.

We request that this letter be recorded as a document of the 41st Session of the Human Rights Council and that it be published on the OHCHR website.

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