



A Union of Professionals

June 20, 2018

Mr. Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein
United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
Human Rights Council Branch-Complaint Procedure Unit
OHCHR-Palais Wilson
United Nations Office at Geneva
CH-1211 Geneva 10
SWITZERLAND

Email: CP@ohchr.org

Dear High Commissioner Al Hussein:

Recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world.

-Universal Declaration of Human Rights

We are filing this complaint to the United Nations Human Rights Council in a plea for justice for the children and families subject to torture and gross violations of human rights as the result of the "zero tolerance" policy promulgated and promoted by President Donald Trump and Attorney General Jeff Sessions. This policy is intentionally separating children from their parents who are seeking asylum and protection from civil war, intolerance and social upheaval.

The trauma caused by family separation is heinous under any circumstances, particularly in a civil society centered on family values. It is intolerable and unlawful to separate families who have sacrificed everything to escape the toxic circumstances of their home countries.

The right of asylum is fundamental among human rights principles and is well-established in U.S. and international law. The Trump administration's blanket policy of zero tolerance is far from a legitimate attempt to resolve important migration issues before us; rather it reveals the administration's cruelty and its lack of decency and respect for humanity. When the administration tweets "if you are seeking asylum for your family, there is no reason to break the law," it reveals a cynicism that is both craven and immoral.

The administration's refusal to grant asylum to refugees violates the letter and the spirit of numerous U.N. treaties and protocols that establish the international community's human rights norms and standards, including the Right to Family, the U.N.'s Convention Against Torture, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and the U.N.'s Recommended Principles and Guidelines on Human Rights at International Borders.

The **American Federation of Teachers** is a union of professionals that champions fairness; democracy; economic opportunity; and high-quality public education, healthcare and public services for our students, their families and our communities. We are committed to advancing these principles through community engagement, organizing, collective bargaining and political activism, and especially through the work our members do.

American Federation
of Teachers, AFL-CIO

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AFT PSRP
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AFT Nurses and Health
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Al-Hussein/page 2

In filing this complaint, we call upon the UNHRC to help ensure that migrant families who have been separated have equal and effective access to justice. We ask the council, in the name of the international community, to condemn this policy of separating families and call for its immediate revocation.

We were gratified to see your statement against the zero tolerance policy. Your swift condemnation has been welcome, but at this moment actions are more important than words. That is what has moved us to file this complaint. We know that your actions, and the council's eventual judgement, will be validated by the thousands of concerned citizens who joined us in submitting this complaint.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Randi Weingarten".

Randi Weingarten
President, American Federation of Teachers

RW:bsc opeiu#2, afl-cio

Enclosure



Co-Signers:

American Federation of Teachers (AFT)

A. Philip Randolph Institute

Alianza Americas

Alianza Nacional de Campesinas

Rabbi Katy Z. Allen, Ma'yan Tikvah

Alliance for Quality Education

Alliance to Reclaim Our Schools

American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO)

American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME)

Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance (APALA)

Reverend William J. Barber II

Reverend Micah Bucey

Pastor Ron Buford, Congregational Church of Sunnyvale, CA (UCC)

Center for Popular Democracy

Clearinghouse on Women's Issues

Steve Choi, Executive Director of the New York Immigration Coalition

Coalition of Black Trade Unionists

Coalition of Labor Union Women (CLUW)

Rabbi Ayelet S. Cohen

Congregation Beit Simchat Torah

Reverend Martin B. Copenhaver, President, Andover Newton Theological School

Reverend Dr. Herbert Daughtry, National Presiding Minister, The House of the Lord Churches

Rabbi Elliot Dorff, Ph.D.

John Dorhauer, President, United Church of Christ

Reverend Kaji S. Douša, Senior Pastor, Park Avenue Christian Church

Hazel Dukes, New York State Chapter, NAACP

Rabbi David Eber, Asst. Rabbi, Education, Jewish Reconstructionist Congregation, Evanston

Education International

Rabbi Michael E. Feinberg, Executive Director, Greater New York Labor-Religion Coalition

Rabbi Dr. Tirzah Firestone

Forum for Youth Investment

Rabbi Pam Frydman

Rabbi Ruth Gais

Rabbi Bob Gluck

Anthony Harmon, President, New York Chapter, NAACP

Hip Hop Caucus

Hispanic Federation

Hispanic Heritage Foundation

Pastor Charles Johnson

Rabbi Ariana Katz

Kids In Need of Defense (KIND)

Rabbi Lori Klein
Rabbi Sharon Kleinbaum
Fred Kowal, President, United University Professions (UUP)
Rabbi Nancy Fuchs Kreimer, Ph.D.
Labor Council for Latin American Advancement (LCLAA)
Rabbi Sandra Lawson
Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights
League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC)
MANA, A National Latina Organization
Rabbi Vivian Mayer, Reconstructionist Rabbinical College
Rabbi Mordechai Liebling
Rabbi Paula Marcus
Rabbi Nahariyah Mosenkis
Mi Familia Vota
Move On
National Action Network
National Association for Bilingual Education (NABE)
National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP)
National Coalition on Black Civic Participation
National Domestic Workers Alliance (NDWA)
National Education Association (NEA)
National Hispanic Caucus of State Legislators (NHCSL)
National Hispanic Medical Association (NHMA)
National Immigration Law Center
National Migrant & Seasonal Head Start Association
National Nurses United (NNU)
National Organization for Women
Reverend Dr. John A. Nelson, Church on the Hill, UCC
New York Communities for Change
New York Immigration Coalition
NYC Coalition for Educational Justice
Andy Pallotta, President, New York State United Teachers (NYSUT)
Rabbi David Paskin
Pastors for America's Children
PEN America
Pride at Work
Professional Staff Congress/CUNY, AFT Local 2334
Public Services International (PSI)
Cantor Steve Puzarne
The Rabbinical Assembly
Reconstructionist Rabbinical Association
SAJ: Judaism that Stands for All
Dr. Donna Schaper, Senior Minister, Judson Memorial Church
Reverend Osagyefo Sekou
Service Employees International Union (SEIU)
The Shalom Center

Reverend Al Sharpton
Rabbi Mia Simring
Rabbi Suzzanne Singer, Temple Beth-El, Riverside, CA
Rabbi Ruth H. Sohn
State Innovation Exchange (SiX)
Rabbi David Leipziger Teva
Texas Association for Bilingual Education (TABE)
T'ruah: Rabbinic Call for Human Rights
UndocuBlack Network
United Federation of Teachers (UFT)
United States Hispanic Leadership Institute
United We Dream Action
Uri L'Tzedek: The Orthodox Social Justice Movement
Voto Latino
Rabbi Arthur Waskow, Founder and Director of the Shalom Center
Rabbi Deborah Waxman, Ph.D., President, Reconstructing Judaism
Rabbi Elyse Wechterman
The Workmen's Circle
Rabbi Dr. Shmuly Yanklowitz