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Professor Christine Chinkin
Law Department
London School of Economics
Houghton Street
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8 September 2009

Dear Professor Chinkin,

We wish to express our support for the UN Watch request that you be disqualified from the United Nations Human Rights Council's fact-finding mission on the Gaza conflict and our disappointment that this well-founded request was recently rejected by the mission, as reported by London's *Jewish Chronicle* ("Dispute over 'biased' Gaza inquiry professor," 28 August 2009).

Judge Richard Goldstone, as head of the mission, promised at the outset that it would be impartial. Impartiality requires that fact-finders be free of any commitment to a preconceived outcome. Because you expressed yourself on the merits of the issues prior to seeing any of the evidence, you cannot be considered impartial.

On 11 January 2009, *The Sunday Times* published a letter signed by you and others, which stated that you "categorically reject" Israel's right to claim self-defence against Hamas rocket attacks "deplorable as they are" and that "Israel's actions amount to aggression, not self-defence". You concluded that Israel was acting contrary to international law.

When you were asked about this during a May 2009 meeting with Geneva NGOs, you denied that your impartiality was compromised, saying that your *Sunday Times* letter only addressed *jus ad bellum*, and not *jus in bello*. (Audio recording at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BfiHbvTpmKQ>.)

However, your letter to *The Sunday Times* was not limited to Israel's decision to conduct a military operation in Gaza. It also expressed the categorical view that the Palestinians killed in the operation were "mostly civilians", that humanitarian relief was blockaded by Israel, and that the operation was contrary to international humanitarian and human rights law. It concluded that "the manner and scale of [Israel's] operations in Gaza amount to an act of aggression and is contrary to international law".

All these are disputed issues which must surely bear on the fact-finding mission in which you are engaged. As a professor of international law at the London School of Economics,

it behooves you to recognize that your actions have given rise to a reasonable apprehension of bias. Your refusal to step down necessarily compromises the integrity of this inquiry and its report.

Yours faithfully
Noam Goodman
Stanley W L Freedman
Eric M. Levy
David Matas Q.C.
Allan Adel
Marvin Kurtz
Anita Bromberg
Monty Warsh
Ari Itman
Jeffrey Citron
David Nadler
Jason Caron
Alan Grad
Alan Litwack
Andrea Safer
Lawrence Witt
Tibor Hollander
Norman Bacal
Saul Schipper
David Chodikoff
Andrew Cohen
Aren Prupas
Dean Chenoy
Joel Goldberg
Adam Kardash
Mark Jadd
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Adam S. Goodman
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