US to enlist allies to remove Iran from UN Status of Women Commission

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The Biden administration pledged on Wednesday to partner with allies to oust Iran from the UN Commission on the Status of Women in response to the Islamic Republic’s ongoing abuse of protesters.

“The United States continues to stand with the brave women of Iran as they protest peacefully for their fundamental rights and basic human dignity,” Vice President Kamala Harris said.

“All people in Iran must have the right to freedom of expression and assembly, and Iran must end its use of violence against its own citizens simply for exercising their fundamental freedoms.”

Demonstrators have been [protesting in Iran](https://www.israelnationalnews.com/news/362014) since the September 16 death of 22-year old Mahsa Amini while in the custody of the morality police. On Monday, Iran announced it will hold public trials for 1,000 protesters.

Harris denounced Iran for its human rights abuses, stating that “no nation that systematically abuses the rights of women and girls should play a role in any international or United Nations body charged with protecting these very same rights.”

Pointing out that the UN Commission on the Status of Women and its members are charged with addressing “urgent problems requiring immediate attention in the field of women’s rights,” the Vice President said that through its actions, Iran had shown it did not have the right to be on the committee.

“Iran has demonstrated through its denial of women’s rights and brutal crackdown on its own people that it is unfit to serve on this Commission,” Harris said. “Iran’s very presence discredits the integrity of its membership and the work to advance its mandate. This is why today the United States is announcing our intention to work with our partners to remove Iran from the UN Commission on the Status of Women.”

“To all of those protesting I say again, we see you and we hear you. I am inspired by your bravery, as are people around the world. We will continue to hold accountable the Iranian officials and entities responsible for the violence against protestors,” she added.

The White House’s announcement was applauded by UN Watch, who noted that they were the first organization to expose Iran’s election to the committee in April 2021 — revealing that at least four Western democracies voted for Iran — and to mobilize a global outcry.

“Obviously, a regime that persecutes and subjugates women should never have been elected in the first place, and we welcome this decision to undo that obscenity,” said UN Watch executive director Hillel Neuer.

UN Watch commended Canada, New Zealand, and the Senate of the Netherlands for this week declaring their support for the removal of Iran.

“Not only is it the height of hypocrisy for the Islamic regime of Iran to hold a position of leadership on women’s rights — it is dangerous. The mullahs are using their membership on the UN’s top women’s rights committee as a platform for propaganda to suggest the Tehran regime has a legitimate concern for women’s rights. They do not,” Neuer said. “It’s time to put an end to enabling murderous dictatorships like Iran to spread disinformation to justify their gross abuses against women and girls, and against the population at large.”

“Now is the time for action. UN member states must show the world that they can work responsibly to oust the Iranian regime,” Neuer added.

Anne Bayefsky, Director of the Touro Institute on Human Rights and the Holocaust, and President of Human Rights Voices, commended the administration's announcement, but called on the US to to go further to ensure that nations which abuse human rights are removed from other UN human rights organizations.

"Of course Iran should not be on the UN's highest women's rights body. But the Biden administration is cherry-picking by refusing to call for the immediate removal of China, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, and Venezuela from the UN's top human rights body, the UN Human Rights Council," Bayefsky said.

"In fact, they are legitimizing the Human Rights Council even though it is responsible for the global spread of antisemitism, and even funding the latest antisemitic outrage of a Council "Commission of Inquiry" against Israel. That "Inquiry" goes so far as to blame Israel for the violation of Palestinian women's rights, instead of placing the blame where it belongs - with patriarchal Palestinian society and Palestinian men.

"So the bottom line is the UN has a systematic human rights problem, whereby human rights abusers are in positions of authority, and this administration is playing a pernicious role in legitimizing and funding it," she added.