



June 21, 2018

The Honorable Mike Pompeo
Secretary of State
US Department of State
2201 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20520 USA

Dear Mr. Secretary:

FAWCO is an international women's non-governmental organization with special consultative status to the United Nations Economic and Social Council since 1997. In March 2017, our members unanimously supported a Resolution calling for continued active US engagement on the United Nations Human Rights Council. We are disappointed with the Administration's decision to withdraw the United States from the leading global intergovernmental human rights body. This decision is counterproductive to American national security and foreign policy interests, and will make it more difficult to advance human rights priorities and aid victims of abuse around the world.

2018 marks the 70th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, championed by US First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt. FAWCO honors the legacy of this great American woman leader and calls on the US to remain engaged in efforts to uphold these universal human rights.

We share UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres' regrets about the US decision to withdraw from the Council, where our participation is critical to the promotion and defense of human rights. Without strategic US engagement at the Council, the U.S. loses a platform to positively influence the course of human rights globally. A 2017 study by the Council on Foreign Relations found that U.S. membership on the UN Human Rights Council "can advance U.S. interests...while supporting measures to avert and de-escalate human rights crises, thus reducing the likelihood of costly military interventions."

The American decision to leave the Human Rights Council has been criticized by human rights and humanitarian groups around the world. FAWCO endorses the statement signed by The Better World Campaign, CARE, Council for Global Equality, Committee for Human Rights in North Korea (HRNK), Freedom House, Human Rights Campaign, Human Rights First, Jacob Blaustein Institute for the Advancement of Human Rights, PEN America, Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights, Save the Children and United Nations Association – USA.

The US withdrawal is antithetical to US interests and undermines the fragile global human rights regime. We respectfully urge the Department of State to seek reelection to the UN Human Rights Council in 2019 and to reaffirm the commitment of the US to universal human rights. The US must continue to participate in the important work of the UN Human Rights Council to protect the interests of valuable allies and maintain our global leadership on human rights.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sallie Chaballier".

Sallie Chaballier
FAWCO President