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United Nations Secretary General Antonio Guterres,  
760 United Nations Plaza, New York 10017,  
United States

24 February 2017

Dear Secretary General,

I write to offer my service to you and to propose that you appoint me as your Special Adviser on Whistleblower Protection at the United Nations (UN). I am very keen to assist you in developing a whistleblower protections system for the UN which meets the expectations of the Member States, UN staff, the international community, and which is consistent with best practices. As you know, whistleblower protections have come under increasing scrutiny at the UN, with several high profile cases, including mine. Such cases are damaging to the UN's reputation and they erode public confidence in the organisation as an institution.

I offer my service to you now to help you ensure your public commitment to making the UN's whistleblower protection system "bullet proof" becomes reality. The revised UN whistleblower policy issued on 23 January 2017 is an improvement, however, it fails to meet best practice standards and has left existing whistleblowers in limbo, without clarity or appropriate remedy. Some experts on the matter assert that the revised policy fails to meet the best-practice requirements set out in United States (US) law (Section 7048 of the Consolidated Appropriations Act) for the full disbursement of US funds to the UN. I understand that other Member States may also consider implementing similar legislation to the US, thereby increasing the scrutiny of UN whistleblower protections and the risk of funding cuts. Issuing further revisions of the policy without adequate consultation, including with Member States and UN whistleblowers, will only further erode confidence in the system. The policy clearly needs a thorough overhaul. The internal Working Group established to provide you with advice on how to further improve the policy does not include UN whistleblowers or experts in the field and is unlikely to come-up with credible solutions. The creation of the position of Special Adviser on UN whistleblower protection is justified, given the seriousness and magnitude of the problem.

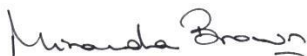
There is also another imperative to ensuring the UN's policy is consistent with best practice, as other international organizations, including the UN specialized agencies frequently follow

the UN's lead and adopt the UN Secretariat's policy with few amendments. I believe my experience as a senior official (D2 level) and whistleblower in a UN specialised agency (WIPO) would be an asset.

I think that I may be uniquely placed to help you resolve what is rapidly becoming a crisis of confidence in the UN whistleblower protection system. Having held senior positions at the Australian Government, which has an outstanding record of accountability in the public service and at a D2 level in at WIPO, I have the leadership skills and managerial experience to provide you with robust policy advice. You may recall us meeting on several occasions in your capacity as High Commissioner for Refugees and mine as the Charge d'Affaires at the Australian Mission to the UN in Geneva (I also hold British and German nationalities). My first-hand experience of blowing the whistle at the UN on a range of violations, involving national and international laws and human rights (including at OHCHR on child sexual abuse in peacekeeping) and implicating senior UN officials, would provide credibility to my appointment as your Special Adviser on Whistleblower Protection at the UN. I have also testified twice before the US Congress (US Senate Foreign Relations Committee and House Committee on Foreign Affairs) on whistleblowing at the UN and have a good knowledge of the US legislation on UN whistleblower protection and the expectations of the US Congress in that regard.

I believe my appointment to a new position of Special Adviser on UN Whistleblower Protection would meet with the approval of Member States, UN staff, civil society organizations that specialize in whistleblower protection and the international community. Together with a small team (perhaps one or two professional staff), I would work collaboratively with all parts of the UN system, Member States, UN staff associations and the lead organisations working on whistleblower protections to provide you with advice on how to improve the UN's whistleblower protection system to ensure it meets the expectation of Member States and delivers adequate protection for staff. I would help you to restore credibility in the UN's whistleblower protection system.

Yours faithfully,



Miranda Brown

Copy to:

US Secretary of State Tillerson

US Ambassador Nikki Haley

US Senator Bob Corker, Chairman of the US Senate Foreign Relations Committee

US Senator Ben Cardin, Ranking Member of the US Senate Foreign Relations Committee

US Congressman Chris Smith, Chairman of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs Sub-Committee on International Organisations and Africa

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