Bert Koenders
Minister of Foreign Affairs
of the Kingdom of the Netherlands
PO Box 20061
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The Netherlands

April 14, 2015

Dear Minister Koenders,

We write to convey our alarm at a series of bizarre and embarassing Twitter posts today by one of your diplomats, Ms. Bregje Wijsenbeek—whose account describes herself as a senior political officer dealing with human rights—in which she incomprehensibly defends the Islamic Republic of Iran as "not misognyst." Worst of all, she did so in response and in purported rebuttal to the UN Women Executive Director's reposting of a condemnation of Iran's absurd recent election to the executive board of that global UN agency.

Ms. Wijsenbeek tweets include:

> **"@HillelNeuer @phumzileunwomen I was just in Iran & its not mysogenyst, main religious structure was built 4 a woman, more women in uni than men"**

> **"@HillelNeuer @phumzileunwomen women move around freely, can work. In metro people stood up for me and gave me all the presents not husband"**

Excellency, as you know, sexual discrimination, denigration of women, and violence against women are manifesations of misogyny, and Iran has been denounced for these gross violations numerous times by the UN General Assembly, most recently in Resolution 69/190 of December 2014, which condemned Iran's "pervasive gender inequality and violence against women and ongoing discrimination against women and girls in law and in practice." Iran was likewise condemned for the same gross and systematic discrimination against women in the reports to the Human Rights Council's 28th Session by the UN Secretary-General, and by the Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in Iran.

Ms. Wijsenbeek's shocking defense of this regime's record on women's rights is an insult to the women of Iran and to human rights defenders worldwide. She should should be fired. We urge you also to clarify the position of the Netherlands on Iran's election to this board and on its dark record of systematic misogyny.

Sincerely,

Hillel C. Neuer
Executive Director

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