

From: COLVILLE Rupert [rcolville@ohchr.org]

Sent: 02 March 2018 20:13

To: [REDACTED]

Subject: Some explanations

Dear [REDACTED],

The following is also off the record. I'm sorry if I was suspicious and bad-tempered, but I have reason to be (some two and a half years of this bullshit). To be honest, while I do not (yet) have any good reason to cast aspersions on your personal integrity as a journalist, and you are right that there are some decent journalists at [REDACTED] our conversation did not reassure me. To say that because Miranda established herself as a whistle-blower at WIPO, this automatically makes her a whistle-blower at OHCHR, because they are both UN organizations, is like saying that because you allege you were treated unfairly by your boss at OK, the hierarchy at the [REDACTED] is equally culpable and must go on renewing your contracts for ever more, when they hired you later on.

Miranda claimed consistently that she was "fired" for X, Y and Z reasons and should be reinstated. When those claims didn't work (because they had no validity whatsoever), she fell back on her WIPO whistle-blower claim and fused it with her claims against OHCHR. Her third reason given for being "fired" was that she was "a key witness" in the Anders Kompass case (i.e. in supporting Anders). Now she claims SHE is the whistle-blower in the CAR sexual abuse case itself – even though this was not a claim she made when describing herself as "a key witness" (itself a fairly late addition to her armoury of reasons why she was "fired"). So she is almost taking over his persona.

You are being played – you are not the first and you won't be the last. She and Bea Edwards – who will no doubt feature prominently in your story -- are very good at it, although the big press corps of local and international journalists here in Geneva, who dug into her many allegations years ago, won't touch her story, and roll their eyes when her name is mentioned.

But if you are as good and honourable a journalist as you say you are, then her constantly changing story should be raising all sorts of red flags. The fact that you had not even heard of WIPO, when it is the heart and soul of her whistle-blower claim, suggests you have not looked very deeply into this.

When I hear the story is effectively written, and you are just coming for a quote, what do you expect me to think about the quality of the story?

I have had your sister paper, the [REDACTED] come to me for similar quotes in their pre-written anti-asylum seeker stories (what was it? 24 anti-asylum seeker front page headlines in a single calendar month?)

I have had the Sun come to me for a quote when a guy in the UK was trying to off-load his totally rusted milk-tanker fleet after a desperate UN appeal for tankers during the cholera epidemic after the Rwanda genocide. The story? Hero Brit, out of the goodness of his heart, offers UN free tankers, and evil UN refuses to accept them (evil UN had in fact gone to inspect them and found them to be a complete health hazard). Did the Sun care about that when it was explained? No. The story went out as pre-written.

I have had the Mirror trying to bribe two pretty Kosovar girls working for an NGO on the Albanian border in 1999 to come with the Mirror crew to her home village, when there were still Serb paramilitaries lurking around, and a real risk of mines and booby traps: Who cares? We just need our pretty-Kosovars-go-home-accompanied-by-the-Mirror story.

The Daily Mail? So many examples I don't know where to begin.

So – the [REDACTED] has its story painting Miranda Brown as victim and my organization as villain all ready in the can, and it wants a quote from said villain to round off the story. Can you blame me for looking at it this way? No sign at all of the [REDACTED] seeking to find out whether Miranda's story is actually true, or whether Miranda is just trying to continue to demand a job to which she has no entitlement. It's all in the Dispute Tribunal judgement. The whistle-blower issue is not gone into by the Tribunal because she had not even made that claim, in relation to OHCHR, and the WIPO case was not relevant to the OHCHR case.

To me there is indeed a scandal here, but it is very different to the one you will no doubt be proclaiming on Sunday, and it involves quite a few other people. It's actually an interesting and important story and no one has written it. But it is very long and complex, not nearly as thrilling as the simple hero-villain narrative, so I'm not expecting anyone to write it anytime soon.

As I said, all of this email, and the phone conversation, are off the record. This long screed and angry words on the phone are the product of extreme frustration with this crap which has gone on for so long. If Miranda had truly been maltreated by my organization, I would say all power to her in her quest for justice. It is my duty to warn you that you are being manipulated. I don't expect you to accept that, or – worse -- even want to consider the possibility of it, but I have to try. You are welcome to talk to some of my colleagues – a former Newsweek journalist; another former print journalist (South China Morning Post – an excellent paper); and a former BBC journalist for 23 years. Like me they would only talk off the record, but if they disagreed with what I've said here they would tell you. You know how bloody-minded journalists are – and they are no exception. But they do have integrity.

Have a good weekend,

Rupert



Rupert Colville

Spokesperson / Head of Media

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

E-mail: rcolville@ohchr.org

Tel: +41 22 917 9767

Web: www.ohchr.org

Twitter: [UNHumanRights](https://twitter.com/UNHumanRights)

Facebook: [unitednationshumanrights](https://www.facebook.com/unitednationshumanrights)

Google+: [unitednationshumanrights](https://plus.google.com/unitednationshumanrights)

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 02 March 2018 14:35
To: COLVILLE Rupert <rcolville@ohchr.org>
Subject: urgent media

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 02 March 2018 12:42
To: mehta2@un.org; larbuisson@un.org; dujarric@un.org; birnbackn@un.org; boudre@un.org
Subject: urgent media

I am social affairs editor of the [REDACTED] which is running a piece about Miranda Brown, former UN human rights officer whose job was not renewed after whistle blew on cases of child rape and abuse in the Central African Republic four years ago. Although she lost her UN dispute tribunal case we understand there is no reverse burden of proof for whistleblowers and so we would like a comment on her case in this context as soon as convenient,

Thank you and best wishes,

[REDACTED]

From: COLVILLE Rupert [rcolville@ohchr.org]

Sent: 03 March 2018 18:38

To: [REDACTED]

Subject: Re: Some explanations

Still off the record: Hope your article notes that (a) Miranda had nothing whatsoever to do with the report on the sexual abuse of six little boys by the French Sangari peacekeepers; (b) they were not UN peacekeepers; (c) the report was researched and written up by a courageous young French woman working in the Central African Republic called Gallianne Palayret (who DOES deserve hero status, but never sought it); (d) neither Kompass nor Miranda (if she even knew about it - I've never seen any evidence that she did) gave the report to the High Commissioner at the time, Navi Pillay. Why not? That is a huge question. Why not tell the person, who could pick up the phone and call the French Minister of Justice or Chief Prosecutor to ensure a proper investigation was carried out by the right people, with careful guarantees that the children were properly protected.

The fact that the perpetrators were never prosecuted is something to reproach the French with -- and possibly Kompass for handling it the way he did (quietly slipping it to the French ambassador, who passed it on to the military -- the perpetrators -- while not telling anyone above him about it until he was found out). The rest is pure spin and invention by two extraordinarily self-centred and dishonest people. Just because one of them sends a letter to the Secretary of State doesn't make it true.

Believe me. I know these cases inside out, and the duplicity of these two (people I used to know and respect) utterly disgusts me -- more than anyone else I have worked with in my thirty-year career (and I've worked with a few other pretty shitty people)

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 03 March 2018 11:10:01

To: COLVILLE Rupert

Subject: RE: Some explanations

Dear Rupert,

Thank you very much for your response. However the fact remains Miranda Brown is writing to our Secretary of State to highlight her concerns, there was a report into serious child sex abuses and the alleged perpetrators were not brought to justice.

We are still planning to run this article but will reflect the UN position Ms Brown's claims around being blacklisted. If you cannot provide an on the record quote from the UN it is far more difficult to put your side of the story.

[REDACTED]

From: COLVILLE Rupert [rcolville@ohchr.org]

Sent: 04 March 2018 19:14

To: [REDACTED]

Subject: Re: Some explanations

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Quite an achievement. You actually manage TWO lies in an 11-word title and repeat both of them in more lurid detail, plus two additional distortions for good measure, in the lead. And since I had already pointed out to you twice -- orally and in writing -- that these were NOT United Nations peacekeepers, but an independent French force, you can't really claim this was accidental, or just a case of incompetent journalism.

I won't bother demolishing the rest of this rubbish, since it is all based on the initial double false premise. The other falsehood is that Miranda had anything whatsoever to do with "exposing the vile UN child abuses" -- where is your evidence for that? I've reviewed dozens of documents related to this extremely unpleasant case of abuse of six young boys by non-UN French soldiers, and she doesn't feature anywhere). To be fair to Miranda, she carefully -- according to the quote you cite -- doesn't actually quite say they were UN troops. It is you, [REDACTED], and the [REDACTED], who tell the outright lie. But, to be fair to you, that is what she intended you to do. After all, aren't all peacekeepers with the UN? No, actually, they are not.

And, by the way, your "British woman" is a former Australian diplomat, which in my book would make her Australian. She only describes herself as British when it suits her (i.e. when she wants the British Government or a British tabloid to adopt her cause). Not a single thing you quote her saying in this article is true. Not one single thing. And you specifically told me you had tested all her claims.

The child abuse was indeed vile -- I have read the initial write-up of the interviews with these little boys (one of whom may have been only 8 years old at the time), and it is truly shocking stuff. But it was not committed by anyone who had had anything whatsoever to do with the UN. So that is slander. The UN found out about it, and did an initial investigation into it. What is bad about that?

The French authorities have just closed the case without prosecuting a single soldier, which is at best disappointing and at worst a disgraceful failure on their part. Hardly anyone noticed, because the likes of Anders Kompass and Miranda Brown have so successfully marketed the idea that this is a UN scandal, when it was actually a French scandal, and Kompass was totally in bed with the French.

All the above is off the record. But a clear retraction by both print and electronic versions of the [REDACTED] is the minimum you could do to rectify the false attribution of these crimes to the UN. I'll leave you in peace now. You're not the only journalist who has closed her eyes to the red flags in this story -- in fact the newspaper which set off this wildly inaccurate story originally was the Guardian, which even illustrated the story with a photo of soldiers in UN blue helmets (i.e. real UN peacekeepers to illustrate a story that was about non-U peacekeepers committing child sex abuse).
