

Letter**Letter: UN's human rights work was never more critical**

From Madeleine Sinclair, New York, NY, US



Marking Human Rights Day in Hong Kong on Sunday © Bloomberg

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Andrew Gilmour is right to highlight the appalling phenomenon of threats and attacks against individuals that provide the UN with information about human rights violations (“[Human rights are suffering an onslaught of attacks](#)”, FT.com, December 9). Such attacks are not incidental — they operate as powerful signals to human rights defenders back home that those speaking out will be silenced. Of course, it is in countries where human rights defenders find their work restricted that unhindered access to the UN is all the more crucial.

The UN's work preventing and addressing reprisals is critical. We look forward to the new UN Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights, Ilze Brands Kehris, showing leadership and courage on this issue, regardless of how powerful the perpetrators are.

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