



Councillor Paul Ainslie
Toronto City Hall
Scarborough Civic Centre
150 Borough Drive, 2nd floor
Scarborough, ON M1P 4N7
councillor_ainslie@toronto.ca

April 11, 2016

RE: Council motion to document homeless deaths

Dear Councillor Ainslie,

I am pleased to contact you in my capacity as UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Housing and introduce myself as well as my mandate. As Special Rapporteur I have the privilege of assisting governments as well as other stakeholders globally in their ability to respect and protect the right to adequate housing.

I recently read about the motion you put forward to the Toronto City Council regarding the documentation of homeless deaths in your region. As a notoriously hidden problem, this effort can help to make visible what I believe is the most severe violation of the right to housing.

In my most recent report to the UN Human Rights Council I called for broad action on homelessness globally and for states to unite in agreement to end homelessness by 2030 in line with target 11.1 of the Sustainable Development Goals which aims to “ensure access for all to adequate, safe and affordable housing”. The UN Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development in Quito, Ecuador which will be held this October offers governments an opportunity to ensure this goal is made a reality by supporting the right to housing as fundamental to future urban policy. Your leadership at the city level can inspire other municipal and regional leads to step forward so that the right to housing is fulfilled, and homelessness eliminated.

Thank you for your work towards eliminating homelessness. I welcome further correspondence and look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Leilani Farha
UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Housing

CC: Premier of Ontario, Kathleen Wynne
Minister Ted McMeekin, Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing
Mayor of Toronto, John Tory

