

---

## Special Rapporteur on Occupied Palestinian Territory resigns due to continued lack of access to OPT

GENEVA (4 January 2016) – The United Nations Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian territories, Makarim Wibisono, today submitted his resignation to the President of the Human Rights Council, effective as of 31 March 2016.

The independent expert expressed deep regret that, throughout his mandate, Israel failed to grant him access to the Occupied Palestinian Territory. “Unfortunately, my efforts to help improve the lives of Palestinian victims of violations under the Israeli occupation have been frustrated every step of the way,” said Mr. Wibisono.

The Special Rapporteur stressed that upon taking up the mandate in June 2014, he was assured that he would have access to the Occupied Palestinian Territory. “I took up this mandate with the understanding that Israel would grant me access, as an impartial and objective observer,” he said.

Repeated requests for access, both written and oral, have been unsuccessful. “With no reply from Israel to my latest request, in October 2015, to have access by the end of 2015, it is with deep regret that I accept the premise upon which I took up the mandate, which is to have direct access to the victims in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, will not be fulfilled,” the Special Rapporteur said.

Mr. Wibisono said that throughout his tenure, the Government of the State of Palestine cooperated fully with the mandate.

The Special Rapporteur voiced deep concern at the lack of effective protection of Palestinian victims of continuing human rights violations and violations of international humanitarian law.

“I reluctantly wish to pass the baton to a successor, selected by the Human Rights Council. It is my sincere hope that whoever succeeds me will manage to resolve the current impasse, and so reassure the Palestinian people that after nearly half a century of occupation the world has not forgotten their plight and that universal human rights are indeed universal,” said Mr. Wibisono.

The Special Rapporteur underscored that it was important for Israel’s own human rights credibility to cooperate fully with the mandate, including by allowing unfettered access to the Occupied Palestinian Territory.

The Independent expert will present his last report to the 31st session of the United Nations Human Rights Council in March 2016.

ENDS

*In 2014, the UN Human Rights Council designated Makarim Wibisono (Indonesia) as the sixth Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian territories occupied since 1967. The mandate was originally established in 1993 by the UN Commission on Human Rights. Learn more, log on to: <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/SP/CountriesMandates/PS/Pages/SRPalestine.aspx>*

*Check the Special Rapporteur’s last report to the UN Human Rights Council:*

<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/HRC/RegularSessions/Session25/Pages/ListReports.aspx>

*The Special Rapporteurs are part of what is known as the Special Procedures of the Human Rights Council. Special Procedures, the largest body of independent experts in the UN Human Rights system, is the general name of the Council’s independent fact-finding and monitoring mechanisms that address either specific country situations or thematic issues in all parts of the world. Special Procedures’ experts work on a voluntary basis; they are not UN staff and do not receive a salary for their work. They are independent from any government or organization and serve in their individual capacity.*

OHCHR Country Page – Occupied Palestinian Territories: <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/countries/MENARegion/Pages/PSIndex.aspx>

OHCHR Country Page – Israel: <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Countries/MENARegion/Pages/ILIndex.aspx>

*For more information and **media requests**, please contact Ajith Sunghay (+41 22 928 9353 / [asunghay@ohchr.org](mailto:asunghay@ohchr.org)) or write to [sropt@ohchr.org](mailto:sropt@ohchr.org). For your news websites and social media: Key messages about our news releases are available on UN Human Rights social media channels, listed below. Please tag us using the proper handles*

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

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

Youtube: [unohchr](https://www.youtube.com/unohchr)

<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=16922&LangID=E>