



## General Assembly GA/PAL/1153

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### **BUREAU OF PALESTINIAN RIGHTS COMMITTEE GRAVELY CONCERNED BY ISRAEL'S**

### **ONGOING POLICY OF OCCUPATION, SETTLEMENT EXPANSION IN EAST JERUSALEM**

This statement was issued today by the Bureau of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People on the situation in occupied East Jerusalem:

The Bureau of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People is gravely concerned about Israel's ongoing policy of perpetuating its occupation of East Jerusalem through settlement expansion and other policies and actions illegal under international law.

We view it as alarming and totally unacceptable that the Government of Israel continues to flagrantly dismiss numerous calls by members of the international community, including the Quartet, for halting the illegal settlement activity in the Occupied West Bank and especially in East Jerusalem. Prime Minister Netanyahu's latest statements in that regard send a clear message to the international community that the Israeli strategy is to continue to build illegally in Jerusalem. The approval by the Ministry of the Interior of plans to add 1,600 new housing units in the "Ramat Shlomo" settlement in East Jerusalem is yet another sign of such intentions.

Amid other illegal and highly provocative actions, including the recent dedication of a synagogue in the vicinity of the Al-Aqsa Mosque, the occupying Power has continued to displace Palestinian residents in East Jerusalem through illegal house demolitions, evictions and residency right revocations.

East Jerusalem is an occupied territory, and Israel, the occupying Power, is fully bound by the provisions of international law, including the Fourth Geneva Convention. Article 49 of the Convention stipulates that: "The Occupying Power shall not deport or transfer parts of its own civilian population into the territory it occupies". Settlement expansion and transfer of Israeli citizens to settlements, as well as forced-transfer of Palestinian residents out of the City, constitute unquestionable violations of Article 49 of the Convention. The international community must act against the persisting violation of international law, or will risk undermining the credibility of this important international legal framework, on which other conflict situations in the world depend.

By unlawfully creating such facts on the ground, the Government of Israel is pre-determining the outcome of the permanent status negotiations and, therefore, will render negotiations on the status of Jerusalem meaningless. Israel's actions and policy on the issue of settlements also seriously threaten the prospects of ever achieving a comprehensive, just and lasting settlement of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict on the basis of the two-State solution. These illegal and provocative actions of the Israeli leadership are also directly undermining current efforts at resuming the political process between the parties.

The Bureau of the Committee reiterates its calls on the Israeli Government to immediately stop all its settlement activity and to refrain forthwith from any measures and actions that may alter the legal, demographic and cultural character and status of the Occupied East Jerusalem and the rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory. We wish to remind Israel about the stated commitment of the international community not to recognize attempts at annexing East Jerusalem or any changes to the pre-1967 borders, other than those agreed by the parties through negotiations. The Bureau welcomes in this regard the statement issued today, 19 March 2010, in Moscow by the Quartet. The Bureau of the Committee strongly urges the continued active engagement by the Quartet, and urges the Security Council to act as the genuine guarantor of international peace and security in a most decisive manner against the continuing violations by Israel, the occupying Power, of resolution 252 (1968) and all subsequent resolutions relevant to the status of Jerusalem.

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