



UNOG
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HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL CONCLUDES CONSIDERATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION IN PALESTINE AND OTHER OCCUPIED ARAB TERRITORIES

24 March 2009

The Human Rights Council this morning concluded its consideration of the human rights situation in Palestine and other occupied Arab territories after holding an interactive dialogue on the annual report of Richard Falk, the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian territories occupied since 1967, and a general debate on the human rights situation in Palestine and other occupied Arab territories.

In the interactive dialogue with Mr. Falk, speakers expressed their concern about Israel's refusal to cooperate with the Special Rapporteur and his expulsion from Israel, which was a violation and a dangerous precedent. Such behaviour by the Israeli authorities was a reflection once again of Israel's scorn for the United Nations and the international community as a whole. One speaker noted that the mandate on the Occupied Palestinian Territories was the only Special Procedure which had not yet been subject to the review and rationalisation exercise by the Human Rights Council and hoped that it would be possible to complete this process soon. Some speakers regretted that the mandate of the Special Rapporteur extended only to reporting on Israel's responsibilities under the Fourth Geneva Convention. The Council should maintain a balanced, objective, and constructive focus on the situation in Israel and in the Palestinian territories and avoid its one-sided focus and premature legal conclusions.

In concluding remarks, Mr. Falk said the representative of Israel had suggested that the Gaza Strip was no longer under occupation, given the 2005 disengagement by Israeli forces. It was Mr. Falk's judgement as an international law expert, and the judgement of the international law community in general that Israel had not relinquished occupation by its disengagement plan, but sustained it by the effective control over the Gaza Strip, exhibited by the total control over the border crossings and airspace, and taking upon itself the discretion to attack within Gaza, and the control of the sea. The fourth Geneva Convention continued to apply, and Israel was regarded, for legal purposes, as the occupying power. The dire humanitarian conditions and the unfolding humanitarian catastrophe that continued in Gaza could not be ignored.

Speaking in the interactive dialogue were Djibouti, Egypt, Czech Republic on behalf of the European Union, United States, Yemen on behalf of the Arab Group, Syria, Bangladesh, Malaysia and Jordan. The following non-governmental organizations also took the floor: Cairo Institute of Human Rights Studies, North-South XXI and Coordinating Board of Jewish Organizations.

At the beginning of the general debate on the human rights situation in Palestine and other occupied Arab territories, Israel, Palestine and Syria spoke as concerned countries.

Israel said that Israel had made clear that it rejected this biased and politicized agenda item that diminished the very credibility and legitimacy of the Council while it offered the region nothing more than empty political rhetoric. For eight years the citizens of southern Israel, innocent civilians, had suffered the trauma of more than 8,000 missile attacks from Gaza. No country in this chamber, no country in the world, would permit such attacks against its citizens. Yet when Israel acted merely in self-defense to stop the relentless onslaught of rockets and terrorism, wild accusations were made and history was turned on its head.

Palestine said Jerusalem was the political capital of Palestine, the sacred city for Palestinians and any attempt to change the Islamic and Christian sites in Jerusalem with the building of the Wall was evidence that Israel's discriminatory practices to Judaize those areas had failed. Israel was attempting to change the demographic composure of East Jerusalem by building settlements in East Jerusalem and closing the city off from Palestinians by building the Separation Wall. The United Nations recognized East Jerusalem as part of the Occupied Territories and building settlements in this area was contrary to those laws.

Syria said the whole world, and in particular the delegations in the Human Rights Council, remained inactive facing the human rights violations taking place in the Occupied Palestinian Territories and the Occupied Syrian Golan. It appeared as though Israel was above the law, and accountable to none. The occupation of Syrian lands continued - Israeli identity was imposed on Syrian inhabitants, and water was diverted from the lands to be made available to Israeli citizens. Racial and religious discrimination continued. An end should be put to Israeli occupation of all Arab territories, including the Syrian Golan, and the Human Rights Council should put an end to the suffering of Syrian citizens in the Golan.

In the general debate, speakers condemned the war crimes committed by Israel in Gaza and called for those responsible to be held to account. Both Israel and the Palestinian Authority were urged to respect human rights and international humanitarian law, and all parties had responsibilities as regarded preventing, investigating and remedying human rights violations, including while fighting terrorism. Israel should facilitate access to Gaza for investigations into violations of human rights and international humanitarian law, and all parties should fully cooperate with such investigations. Speakers recognised the right of Israel to defend its civilians against the indiscriminate rocket attacks from Gaza, however, this right had to be exercised in accordance with international law. Support was expressed for a peaceful solution to the Middle East conflict, with the objective of two States living side by side in peace and security in accordance with the relevant Security Council resolutions and as laid out in the Road Map drawn by the Quartet. Palestinians had to have their own sovereign state, with East Jerusalem as the capital. Israel also continued to defy international legislation in occupying the Syrian Golan. It was important to keep both the humanitarian concerns of the Palestinian people and the security of Israeli citizens in mind when considering this complex situation. Both sides bore a responsibility to, at a minimum, ensure against the targeting of civilians as such, and to comply with international law.

Speaking in the general debate were Yemen on behalf of the Arab Group, Organization of the Islamic Conference, Czech Republic on behalf of the European Union, Cuba on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement, Egypt on behalf of the African Group, Qatar, Switzerland, Egypt in its national capacity,

Brazil, Malaysia, Saudi Arabia, Russian Federation, Bahrain, Slovenia, Kuwait, Algeria, Turkey, Morocco, Oman, United States, Iran, Tunisia, Libya, Yemen in its national capacity, Iceland and Lebanon.

The following non-governmental organizations also took the floor: Movement against Racism and for Friendship among Peoples, General Arab Women Federation, United Nations Watch, Women's International Zionist Organization, Union of Arab Jurists, International Organization for the elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, Norwegian Refugee Council, Al Hakim Foundation, Arab Commission for Human Rights, Islamic Human Rights Commission and Indian Movement Tupaj Amaru.

Syria spoke in right of reply.

The Council today is holding back-to-back meetings from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. When it meets at midday, it will hold a general debate on its agenda item on follow-up to and implementation of the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Work.

Interactive Dialogue with Special Rapporteur on Situation of Human Rights in the Palestinian Territories Occupied Since 1967

SAID MOHAMED ([Djibouti](#)) expressed its concern for the systematic refusal of the Israeli authorities to cooperate with the Special Rapporteur as well as their treatment of him, which was a violation of established international law as well as international practice. The next report should be prepared on the basis of updated information gathered in the field. The report gave useful clarifications and details on the atrocities committed by Israel in the Occupied Palestinian Territories. The review showed the Israeli military actions that had been characterised by lack of proportion and distinction, and more than half the injured had been women, children and elderly people. Investigations should be carried out to determine who was responsible and to ensure reparations for those injured. It was imperative for an international fact-finding mission to be established as rapidly as possible to carry out the mandate of the Council from its last Special Session resolution. There could be no lasting solution to the problem as long as the basic issues were avoided - it was urgent for diplomatic efforts to be stepped up to ensure an end to the blockade and colonisation.

HISHAM BADR ([Egypt](#)) said it was disturbed with the mistreatment of Mr. Falk, who had been held for many hours and searched at the airport in Israel, then expelled from Israel, and this despite his status as a representative of the United Nations. Such behaviour by the Israeli authorities was a reflection once again of Israel's scorn for the United Nations and the international community as a whole. The parties who had continuously defended human rights would not have behaved the same way had another State been involved. The Special Rapporteur's report gave a very frightening description of the most recent intervention of Israel in Gaza. Israel used banned weapons, and ignored the protocols of times of war, with many dead, over half of whom were women and children. The acts of aggression by Israel did not distinguish between military and civilian targets, and actions of this kind were illegal. Aggression was carried out in full view of the entire world, which had been preaching morality and respect of human rights without really taking the trouble to remove this aggression from the Palestinian territories. As long as Israel denied Palestinians their right to self-determination, the attempts at security would be counterproductive. Only a diplomatic solution would lead to lasting peace for all in the region.

PETR PRECLIK ([Czech Republic](#)), speaking on behalf of the [European Union](#), said that it regretted that the Special Rapporteur had not been allowed entry into the Occupied Palestinian Territories, as the European Union consistently invited all States to cooperate with international human rights mechanisms. While the report attempted to draw a legal analysis of conduct of all parties to the conflict, the European Union asked the Special Rapporteur, whether his mandate, as currently defined, allowed him to look into the situation from all angles and present a full picture thereof. The European Union noted in that regard that the mandate on the Occupied Palestinian Territories was the only Special Procedure which had not yet been subject to the review and rationalisation exercise by the Human Rights Council and the European Union hoped that it would be possible to complete this process soon.

MARK STORELLA ([United States](#)) took note of the report of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian territories, and regretted that the mandate of the Special Rapporteur extended only to reporting on Israel's responsibilities under the Fourth Geneva Convention. The United States had, on many occasions, urged the Council to maintain a balanced, objective, and constructive focus on the situation in Israel and in the Palestinian territories. The United States said that while they fully understood the mandate Special Rapporteur Mr. Falk inherited, they remained concerned about the one-sided focus of the report and cautioned against premature legal conclusions. The report drew attention to alleged violations of international law committed by Israeli forces, yet largely failed to acknowledge Israel's right to self-defense and to protect its citizenry and territory. No Government could be expected to tolerate violence against its citizens and territory, and the United States once again condemned the use of Gaza as a base from which to attack Israeli citizens.

IBRAHIM SAIED MOHAMED AL-ADOOFI ([Yemen](#)), speaking on behalf of the [Arab Group](#), said the Arab Group firmly condemned the actions undertaken by the Occupying Power by refusing entry to the Special Rapporteur, detaining him in the airport for several hours, then expelling him to the United States, which was a serious precedent. Israel should be forced to abide by the resolutions and decisions of the Council, and to cooperate with United Nations missions. The report of the Special Rapporteur was very important, as it referred to the latest actions of Israel in the Gaza Strip as war crimes and noted flagrant breaches of the war Protocols. The siege of the Gaza Strip was a flagrant violation of article 53 and 55 of the Fourth Geneva Convention that prohibited collective punishment and reaffirmed the responsibility of the occupying power to provide medical care and food to the occupied. Israel had maintained the siege for over two years now. The Council should, within its mandate, show its responsibilities, and follow up on the recommendations and conclusions of the Special Rapporteur in order to achieve the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people and the independence of the Palestinian State.

RANIA AL RIFAIY ([Syria](#)) said that Syria thanked Mr. Falk for his work and appreciated the professionalism with which he had looked at the barbaric occupation in the Occupied Palestinian Territories. The argument on the Israeli side was always self-defense: but what about the Palestinians who died by the dozen every day, sometimes slowly. The Special Rapporteur described clearly the Israeli occupiers, and their deeds as peace crimes and crimes against humanity. Syria congratulated the Special Rapporteur on having provided a legal perspective on what was an occupation of Palestine.

MUSTAFIZUR RAHMAN ([Bangladesh](#)) thanked Professor Richard Falk for his report and presentation. Bangladesh regretted that Israel did not allow Mr. Falk to enter into the Occupied Palestinian Territory to complete his mission. The silence of those who otherwise stressed the importance of Special Procedures and country visits for the protection of human rights was worrisome and would only add to the continued dire situation in which the Palestinian people lived day to day. It was not an over statement to say that Israeli actions had converted occupied Gaza into an open-air prison. If settlement actions continued to proceed, there would no longer be any land left for Palestinians to live, besides a few ghettos. This issue, which was of great concern to Bangladesh, had not yet been given the due attention it required. The report and its recommendations had to be seriously considered by the Human Rights Council, as otherwise the situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory could not be resolved.

ANIZAN SITI HAJAR ADNIN ([Malaysia](#)) said Malaysia deplored the unacceptable treatment of the Special Rapporteur by Israeli authorities while on an officially-sanctioned visit in the discharge of his mandate - his expulsion was yet another manifestation of Israel's contempt for international human rights mechanisms, and this should be challenged by the international community. Certain elements during the conduct of the recent military assault on Gaza by Israel could constitute war crimes and crimes against humanity. Pending the complete and verifiable withdrawal of Israel from the Occupied Palestinian Territory, provisions of the Fourth Geneva Convention remained fully applicable. Malaysia reaffirmed its complete rejection of the collective punishment imposed on the Palestinian people by Israel. The independent international fact-finding mission should be established to investigate all violations of international human rights law and international humanitarian law by Israel against the Palestinian people throughout the Occupied Gaza Strip.

GHADEER EL-FAYEZ ([Jordan](#)) said that there was no military solution to the conflict in the Middle East and all parties concerned, notably Israel, must abide by their obligations under international law, particularly international humanitarian law and human rights law to ensure the protection of civilians and the unhindered provision of humanitarian assistance, which was also reaffirmed by Security Council resolution 1860. The Gaza Strip remained an occupied Palestinian territory and was subject to the provisions of international humanitarian law, particularly the Fourth Geneva Convention and human rights law. Accountability and international criminal justice must be upheld including through bringing perpetrators of grave violations of international humanitarian law and human rights law to justice and through providing effective remedies to victims and their families. The construction of Israeli settlements and their expansion in the Occupied Palestinian Territories and other occupied Arab territories was a breach of international law and had no legal validity. It also ran contrary to the efforts to reach a just and lasting peace in the Middle East.

HILLEL NEUER, of [United Nations Watch](#), said that paragraph one of Mr. Falk's report referred to the mandate given to him by the Council. Yet why did he omit mention of its inherently one-sided terms; and why did he disclose to the reader that everything he said and wrote was governed by express

Council instructions to look only at the actions of Israel, asked United Nations Watch. Further, was it not a material fact that his instructions were to completely ignore the actions of Hamas and other Palestinian terrorist groups, and of all other actors in the region, including terror-sponsoring States like Iran and Syria, asked United Nations Watch.

JEREMIE SMITH, of [Cairo Institute of Human Rights Studies](#), commended the astute and depoliticised assessment of violations of international law resulting from the Israeli offensive on Gaza launched earlier this year, and fully endorsed the findings and recommendations of the report of the Special Rapporteur on human rights in the Palestinian Territories. The Israeli offensive against Gaza would seem to constitute a war crime of the greatest magnitude, and as such, third parties to the conflict had several legal responsibilities. War crimes committed in the Gaza Strip by Israel had not occurred in a legal void but within an international legal context that required direct action to be taken by a multiplicity of actors and organizations, and placed a strong obligation on the international community as a whole to ensure that a full investigation and prosecution of any crimes committed by both parties to the conflict took place. If political will failed, then international standards of justice would also fail.

LILY AUROVILLIAN, of [North-South XXI](#), expressed its most profound respect for the Palestinian people, especially those in Gaza, the victims of the latest Israeli aggression that continued even as they spoke with the shelling of Khan Younis this morning, claiming two more lives of individuals who had bravely maintained their commitment to their human right to self-determination. Mr. Falk's report reiterated the widespread and serious nature of the ongoing violation of Palestinian human rights by the Government of Israel. It also emphasized the insidious, deadly and ongoing nature of Israel's oppressive discrimination against the Palestinian people. North-South XXI noted with regret the failure of the Human Rights Council and indeed the United Nations for more than sixty years to end the violation of the Palestinian's human rights, including their right to self-determination.

KLAUS NETTER, of [Coordination Board of Jewish Organizations](#), in a joint statement with B'nai B'rith International, said that the Special Rapporteur started out with an undoubtedly truthful statement regarding the denial of his entry into Israel on 14 December 2008. What he forgot to mention was that he had been explicitly informed by Israel authorities in advance of his attempted mission that his visit was not welcome. Thus, one was confronted with a half-truth right at the outset of his report. The reason for the denied entry could be found in the one-sidedness of his mandate, which he himself had criticized on taking up his assignment as Special Rapporteur.

RICHARD FALK, [Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian territories occupied since 1967](#), said to begin with, responding to the representative of Israel, who suggested that the Gaza Strip was no longer under occupation, given the 2005 disengagement by Israeli forces, it was his judgement as an international law expert, and the judgement of the international law community in general that Israel had not relinquished occupation by its disengagement plan, but sustained it by the effective control over the Gaza Strip, exhibited by the total control over the border crossings and airspace, and taking upon itself the discretion to attack within Gaza, and the control of the sea. The fourth Geneva Convention continued to apply, and Israel was regarded, for legal purposes, as the occupying power. The dire humanitarian conditions and the unfolding humanitarian catastrophe that continued in Gaza could not be ignored. The Israeli representative said that Israel intended to initiate its own military investigations of alleged misconduct by the IDF forces - this was a welcome development, and it was hoped that it would be carried out in an impartial, transparent and independent fashion, but it was insufficient, nor did it relieve the international community of its responsibility to mount an independent investigation into these allegations.

Mr. Falk had consistently condemned the rocket and mortar fire attacks by Hamas on Israeli civilian targets - these could not be reconciled with international humanitarian law, and did give Israel a right of response. At the same time, there was a need for some sense of the comparative magnitude of the harm done by the rocket attacks versus the harm done by the military assaults that Israel had mounted against the people of Gaza. Some sense of this could be given by comparing casualty ratios on both sides. This also related to the issue of self-defence - Israel and any other sovereign State had this right, but it should be exercised in accordance with international law and on the basis of a compelling factual situation, which did not exist in the situation preceding the December attacks on Gaza. There were diplomatic alternatives which should be relied upon before recourse to warfare. There was no reasonable argument that could be put forward convincingly for Israel's right to self-defence in the period preceding the 27 December attacks.

The criticisms on balance and selectivity should be related to the actual relationship of Israel to the people of the Occupied Palestinian Territories - what the Special Rapporteur reported was as factual as possible, an account of the actual situation, premised on a reasonable interpretation of international law. The Council should take seriously the recommendations that were offered at the end of the report, and should not overlook the threat to Palestinian self-determination that arose from continuing settlement expansion in the West Bank and house demolitions in East Jerusalem.

Human Rights Situation in Palestine and Other Occupied Arab Territories

Statements by Concerned Countries

AHARON LESHNO-YAAR ([Israel](#)), speaking as a concerned country, said that the very existence of the item the Human Rights Council was discussing right now was a flagrant violation of the founding principles of this Council and the Charter of the United Nations. Israel had made clear that it rejected this biased and politicized agenda item that diminished the very credibility and legitimacy of this body while it offered the region nothing more than empty political rhetoric. For eight years the citizens of southern Israel, innocent civilians, had suffered the trauma of more than 8,000 missile attacks from Gaza. No country in this chamber, no country in the world, would permit such attacks against its citizens. Yet when Israel acted merely in self-defence to stop the relentless onslaught of rockets and terrorism, wild accusations were made and history was turned on its head.

This Council eagerly condemned any Israeli military action while it made cynical attempts at so-called balance by labeling Hamas attacks as crude and indiscriminate. Yet Hamas' openly declared war against Israel was anything but crude and indiscriminate. Hamas' terrorism was very discriminate and its rockets were directed deliberately at civilians, innocent men, women and children. When Palestinians used the terrorist's tactic, the coward's tactic, of using civilians as shields while leaders made pathetic demonstrations of bravado from bunkers in Gaza and luxury hotels in Damascus, this Council condemned Israel. When Palestinian stored weapons in mosques, schools and hospitals, when they launched attacks from inside homes and adjacent to United Nations facilities, this Council condemned Israel.

IBRAHIM KHRAISHI ([Palestine](#)), speaking as a concerned country, said Jerusalem was the cultural capital for 2009. It was the political capital of Palestine, the sacred city for Palestinians and any attempt to change the Islamic and Christian sites in Jerusalem with the building of the Wall was evidence that Israel's discriminatory practices to Judaize those areas had failed. Israel was attempting to change the demographic composure of East Jerusalem with an attempt to increase the number of Jews while decreasing the number of Muslims and Christians, by building settlements in East Jerusalem and closing the city off from Palestinians, and by building the Separation Wall. After 1967 Israel started building settlements in East Jerusalem which was in direct contradiction with the Fourth Geneva Convention. The authorities had a responsibility to not displace the populations. The Wall was being built within the borders of the West Bank, and Israel attempted to unilaterally impose its borders on Jerusalem, and separate Jerusalem from the West bank.

International customary law under Article 2 of the United Nations Charter was violated by Israel as the United Nations recognized East Jerusalem as part of the Occupied Territories and building settlements in this area was contrary to those laws. The logic of force used by Israel would not be successful, at the end the logic of justice would prevail and Israel would have to respect the legitimate rights of the Palestinians and abide by international legitimacy in the end. Palestine called on the Occupying Power to abide by its responsibilities, including international humanitarian law, international human rights law, international law and the Fourth Geneva Convention which governed east Jerusalem.

FAYSAL KHABBAZ HAMOUI ([Syria](#)), speaking as a concerned country, said if all the violations by the Occupying Power over the last 42 years were listed, there would not be enough time to do so. If the provisions of international law, international humanitarian law, international human rights law and other instruments that had been violated by the Occupying Forces were listed, the list would be endless. All this while the whole world, and in particular the delegations in the Human Rights Council, remained inactive facing the human rights violations taking place in the Occupied Palestinian Territories and the Occupied Syrian Golan. It appeared as though Israel was above the law, and accountable to none. There were 14 Syrians who were arbitrarily detained in Israeli prisons, where they were tortured and many had died.

The occupation of Syrian lands continued - Israeli identity was imposed on Syrian inhabitants, and water was diverted from the lands to be made available to Israeli citizens. Racial and religious discrimination continued. An end should be put to Israel's occupation of all Arab territories, including the Syrian Golan, and the Human Rights Council should put an end to the suffering of Syrian citizens in the Golan. All detainees should be released from

Israeli prisons, an end should be put to the diversion of water and other violations, Israeli identity should not be imposed, and those responsible for these violations should be called to account. Israeli forces should realise that they were subject to the same rules and norms as all others in the whole world, and they did not enjoy impunity in the eyes of the entire world.

General Debate on Human Rights Situation in Palestine and Other Occupied Arab Territories

IBRAHIM SAIED MOHAMED AL-ADOOFI, (Yemen), speaking on behalf of the Arab Group, said that the Arab Group firmly condemned the crimes of war committed by Israel before the eyes of the world in Gaza. The Arab Group also vigorously condemned the destruction of infrastructure, schools and hospitals. It called for those responsible to be held to account. Clear instructions had been given not to distinguish between soldiers and civilians. Israel had been continuing the blockade for two years which was a flagrant violation and prevented the Palestinians from enjoying the most basic rights. Jerusalem, which was a spiritual center for Islam, had been Judaized. The Arab Group called on the Council to assist the Palestinian people and to recognize the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination. The Arab Group called on Israel to withdraw from the Syrian Golan and from all Arab territories. Yemen on behalf of the Arab Group had prepared a resolution in that regard and hoped that it would be supported.

MARGHOOB SALEEM BUTT (Pakistan), speaking on behalf of the Organization of the Islamic Conference, said that over the last four decades, Israel, the occupying power, had pursued a policy of disproportionate force, deliberate destruction of infrastructure and killing of civilians to silence the voice of occupied Palestinians. Thousands of innocent Palestinian prisoners had suffered torture and other degrading punishments in Israeli jails. Everyday, thousands suffered insult at the hands of Israeli soldiers while trying to cross checkpoints. Palestinian women and children were legitimate targets of the Israeli Defense Forces' shooting exercise while Palestinian farmers had to live under the threat of eviction to make room for illegal Jewish settlements.

This persecution notwithstanding, the Palestinians were not prepared to part with their inalienable right to self-determination. The right of Palestinians to life and property was severely violated by Israel's deadly attacks in Gaza last year. This was evident from the killing of over 1,430 Palestinians including 288 children and 121 women in less than two weeks. Those attacks had left 5,303 Palestinians injured, including 1,606 children and 828 women.

TOMAS HUSAK (Czech Republic), speaking on behalf of the European Union, said the European Union continued to urge both Israel and the Palestinian Authority to respect human rights and international humanitarian law. All parties had responsibilities as regarded preventing, investigating and remedying human rights violations, including while fighting terrorism. Israel should facilitate access to Gaza for investigations into violations of human rights and international humanitarian law, and all parties should fully cooperate with such investigations. The European Union recognised the right of Israel to defend its civilians against the indiscriminate rocket attacks from Gaza, however, this right had to be exercised in accordance with international law. Israel should allow the immediate, full and sustained opening of the crossings into Gaza. The European Union was committed to supporting the efforts of both Palestinians and Israelis to achieve a just, comprehensive and lasting solution to the Middle East conflict, underpinned by the Arab Peace Initiative, with the objective of two States, living side by side in peace and security in accordance with the relevant Security Council resolutions and as laid out in the Road Map drawn by the Quartet.

MARIA DEL CARMEN HERRERA (Cuba), speaking on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement, said that as a result of the Israeli aggression, the human rights of the Palestinian people were violated and massacred by the force of the weapons of the Israeli army. The Israeli troops destroyed everything: the infrastructure, mosques, United Nations schools, hospitals, universities and houses. The aggression just worsened the already precarious situation that existed in Gaza, as a result of the illegal inhumane siege of the Strip. For more than 42 years, the peoples living in the Palestinian and other Arab Occupied Territories, including the Occupied Syrian Golan, had continuously suffered the Israeli military occupation of their lands. Israel's violations of international law and international humanitarian law were clear and undeniable. Evidence of that were its deliberate and unlawful policies and practices aimed at altering the demographic composition, character and nature of the lands under occupation, as well as the illegal annexation of territories, particularly through the implementation of its illegal colonial settlement policy and since 2003 through the illegal construction of the Wall.

HISHAM BADR (Egypt), speaking on behalf of the African Group, said the grave violations of human rights and international human rights law committed by Israel against the population of Gaza would never be forgotten. The African Group was greatly disturbed by the horrifying facts revealed by both the report Mr. Falk and the joint report of the Special Rapporteurs and the Representative of the Secretary General. As methodically explained by Mr. Falk, there was no legal basis for an occupying power to claim self defense against the people it was occupying. Despite its repeated attempts to derogate its responsibilities under international humanitarian law, Israel remained the occupying power in all Occupied Palestinian Territories, including Gaza. The African Group emphasized the illegality of all Israeli measures in the occupied Syrian Golan, including the establishment of settlements on Arab confiscated lands and imposing Israeli citizenship on the Syrian population. The African Group would like, once again, to reaffirm its solidarity with all the Arab population under the Israeli occupation.

FAISAL ABDULLA AL-HENZAB (Qatar) said the barbarous crimes in Gaza should not lead the international community to forget that the Palestinian people had been suffering for over 60 years. Generations had been forcibly deported and made to live in refugee camps on their own territory as a result of Israel's occupation, which had exacerbated the suffering of the Palestinian people. The continued blockade, the closure of Gaza for more than two years and the latest aggression raised questions as to the responsibility and commitment of Member States with regards to the Geneva Conventions, in particular article 6 of the Fourth Geneva Convention. Qatar supported the proposal which invited a fact-finding mission to be set up to examine Israel's actions and to possibly set up a special tribunal to try these actions under international law. Attention should be drawn to the occupation of the Golan and the suffering of families dispersed there - this was an issue which should be settled urgently. All resolutions should be implemented which would establish international legality and put an end to the occupation of Palestinian territory and of the Golan. The Palestinian people should be able to enjoy their own state in order to benefit from civil and political rights and economic, social and cultural rights on an equal footing with all other peoples in the world.

DANTE MARTINELLI (Switzerland) said that Switzerland was deeply saddened by the armed conflict that had taken place in Gaza in December 2008 and January 2009 and deplored the enormous human cost: more than 1,300 dead and thousands wounded, invalid and traumatized. The situation of children, who made up more than 50 per cent of the population of Gaza, and who bore the full brunt of this crisis, deserved particular attention. Neither silence nor impunity was a reply, only a fact-finding mission on both sides was an answer, the international community owed the victims such as mission. Transit points had to be reliably open for humanitarian assistance and the private sector. Switzerland called on Israel to immediately stop the settlements and stop plans of recently announced new settlements. Switzerland was also concerned about arbitrary detention, ill treatment of prisoners and extrajudicial killings in the Gaza Strip. Switzerland reiterated its conviction that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict could only be resolved by negotiations.

HISHAM BADR (Egypt) said that Israel always claimed that it was a peace loving democracy and that it was always defending itself against terrorism and that the Council was always blaming it for human rights violations. Egypt asked if the notion of democracy entailed occupying others, stealing their natural resources, building settlements, displacing populations, and building a separation wall; did countering terrorism mean killing women and children in cold blood; was it the United Nations that occupied the lands; was it the United Nations that built the wall forcing populations to be displaced; was it the United Nations that denied children access to schools and education; and was it the United Nations that denied the Palestinian people their right to self-determination?

The case Israel claimed was not a case claimed of its own national security. Rather Israel had reduced the issue to a physiological barrier, which could be resolved over a game of football; one would not be able to truly go forward for true justice. As long as some members in the Council, who had and remained in total disregard of the grave violations of human rights committed by Israel, the Human Rights Council's capacity to deal with future challenges as well as its integrity would be undermined.

MARIA NAZARETH FARANI AZEVEDO (Brazil) said on several occasions in the Council, Brazil had expressed its serious concern for the human rights situation in the Palestinian occupied territories, and these had led Brazil to join international efforts in conferences such as those in Annapolis, Paris and Sharm El Sheikh. The Brazilian Foreign Minister had been to the region to reach out to different stakeholders, and had expressed Brazil's political support for a politically negotiated peaceful end to the conflict. The best way of working for the protection and promotion of human rights was by giving an example. Despite Brazil's efforts, it remained seriously concerned with the human rights situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territories. There had been no concrete advances in the negotiations, and living conditions had continuously deteriorated. The use of force was to be deplored; violence hindered the access of international humanitarian aid and hampered the efforts towards a peaceful, sustainable and negotiated solution for the conflict. There should be a true will for change and engagement on both sides. It was time for peace.

SITI HAJJAR ADNIN (Malaysia) said that the Council had convened no less than four Special Sessions with the aim of addressing the grave situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territories which stemmed from the aggressions of Israel. Regrettably, the outcome of those Special Sessions did not enjoy

consensus. The recent aggression was conducted in blatant violation of the United Nations Charter. Malaysia fully supported measures to ensure that the perpetrators would be brought to justice. Malaysia expressed its concern over Israel's policy of demolition of houses and infrastructure, confiscation of land, expansion of settlements, and construction of the Wall within the Occupied Palestinian Territories. Such activities were in flagrant violation of international law. However, the fact that such defiance on the part of Israel had thus far not gained much attention from the media, especially those based in the West, appeared to enable such illegal conduct to be carried out with impunity. With a view to alleviate the pain of the Palestinian people, it was essential that the occupying power opened all borders in order to let the humanitarian aid into the territories. This would demonstrate a minimum of good faith.

ABDULWAHAB ABDULSALAM ATTAR ([Saudi Arabia](#)) thanked the Special Rapporteur for the quality of his report. The world's media described continued violations of the rights of Palestinians. The war waged against Gaza by Israel, and the collective punishment Israel implemented through the demolition of houses and agricultural lands increased the violations committed against the Palestinian people and the flagrant violations of human rights and international law. The Palestinian people had suffered grave injustices ever since the establishment of the Israeli State. Israel continued to establish settlements, which was again a flagrant violation of the human rights of the Palestinian people. Saudi Arabia was trying to alleviate the suffering of the Palestinians and provided aid to that extent. Saudi Arabia was committed to supporting the work of the Council to provide humanitarian aid to the occupied Palestinian people and to the occupied people of the Golan Heights in order for them to enjoy their human rights.

EVGENY USTINOV ([Russian Federation](#)) said the Russian Federation had consistently called for renewing full-scale Israeli-Palestinian negotiations, and moving to a just solution to existing problems, with an end to Israeli occupation, and an independent Palestinian State, living side-by-side in peace and security. Tanks and planes, just like rockets and shelling, would not resolve any of the problems facing the region, as peaceful dialogue and the parties' observance of all international obligations were the only solution. There could be no repeated military escalation. The situation of the population in Gaza was very difficult, and there was a negative humanitarian situation which was the result of the long blockade. In order to improve the situation, the Russian Federation had participated in the Sharm El Sheikh conference to support the Palestinian economy and reconstruct Gaza. At the same time, all steps undertaken to assist the Palestinian people could only be effective in conditions of stability in the region. The international community should not forget the main task - to preserve the peace process on a generally recognised basis.

ABDULLA ABDULLATIF ABDULLA ([Bahrain](#)) welcomed the Special Rapporteur on the human rights situation in Palestinian territories occupied since 1967. It was the responsibility of countries to respect the rights of all peoples, including the right to self-determination of peoples under occupation. The last war waged against the Gaza Strip had led to many deaths and destruction of infrastructure, it proved the failure of Israel to abide by international legitimacy. The building of new residential units for Israeli settlers would lead to new displacement of Palestinians. Bahrain called on Israel, the occupation power, to take all necessary measures to protect human rights in Gaza and all Arab occupied territories. Bahrain also called on the international community to help the Palestinian people to restore hope and respect for human dignity.

ANDREJ LOGAR ([Slovenia](#)) underlined Slovenia's continuous and serious concern with the human rights situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territories. While Israel had the right to self-defense, it had, as the occupying power, also specific duties under international humanitarian law. Slovenia urged Israeli authorities to fully open the Gaza crossings and to allow immediate, uninterrupted and unconditional delivery of sufficient humanitarian assistance to the people of Gaza. Slovenia strongly supported the efforts of both Palestinians and Israelis to achieve a just, comprehensive and lasting resolution of the Middle East conflict with the objective of two States, living side by side in peace and security. In this vein, Slovenia urged Israel to facilitate the sustainable economic recovery of Gaza and the normalization of social life.

Slovenia had serious concerns with the continuation of the settlement activities as well as with the threat of demolition of Palestinian homes. There were reports about the substantial increase of Palestinian children in custody of Israeli authorities. Furthermore, there were also disturbing reports of unwarranted killings of children in the latest military operation in Gaza, and therefore those violations must be thoroughly investigated and those responsible for violations must be made accountable.

DHARAR ABDUL-RAZZAK RAZZOOQI ([Kuwait](#)) said there would be no peace in the Middle East unless Israel withdrew from all occupied Arab territories, and a viable Palestinian State with East Jerusalem as its capital was established. There were accusations made of Arabs politicising the issue. Politicising the issue was a figment of Israeli imagination, and this was a very sorry state of affairs.

CHIBIHI BOUALEM ([Algeria](#)) said that Algeria followed with concern the aggression of Israel on Gaza. Regarding the recent attacks in Gaza, Algeria said that this was unfortunately not the first time that Israel had committed such massacres. Israel clearly intended to impoverish the Palestinian people and alter the nature of Palestinian towns, cracking down on the freedom of expression of Palestinians and hindering them from accessing sacred sites. Such action aborted all peace efforts. Israel scorned international bodies. Palestinians had to have their own sovereign state, with East Jerusalem as the capital. Israel also continued to defy international legislation in occupying the Syrian Golan.

AHMET UZUMCU ([Turkey](#)) said the Israeli-Palestinian conflict was at the core of other problems in the region and beyond. It continued to be of great concern to all. The human rights situation in the region was worrying. Piecemeal actions would not suffice to end the sufferings in the region. A sustainable improvement could only be possible through a just and lasting settlement to the question of Palestine; a settlement based on two States, living side by side, within recognized and secure borders, in accordance with the United Nations Security Council resolutions. Israelis and Palestinians should come back to the negotiation table on the basis of the principles set out by the Quartet, Annapolis Joint understanding and the Arab Peace Initiative. In the meantime, the members of the Council must ensure that the ceasefire was respected, and United Nations Security Council resolution 1860 must be implemented. Turkey was committed to continue to contribute to both humanitarian and reconstruction activities in Palestine. Turkey remained concerned about the increase of inter-factional violence in Palestine.

OMAR HILALE ([Morocco](#)) said the city of Jerusalem was experiencing a very difficult situation because of Israel's policy of Judaizing the city and expelling those of other religions. The most recent Israeli project was to empty a neighbourhood and ensure religious and cultural situations. It also attempted to ensure cultural events that were Judaistic. These celebrations should show Jerusalem's status as the capital of Palestine. The international community and the Arab community should understand the situation in Jerusalem and that of its inhabitants. Morocco had spared no effort to protect the legal status of Jerusalem and protect its spiritual and cultural identity. The international community and the Council must ensure that the question of Palestine be the foremost of its concerns.

MOHAMED ALSHANTANI ([Oman](#)) said that the Gaza Strip had witnessed a very serious massacre in December 2008 and January 2009. The percentage of women and children among the dead was very high according to data from international bodies. The language of war and violence would always fail and violence would always lead to violence. Israel had to fully withdraw from all territories occupied since 1967, including the Syrian Golan. Oman called on all parties to agree on negotiations. The international community had to shoulder its responsibility in supporting negotiations and the establishment of a Palestinian State side by side with Israel.

MARK CASSEYRE ([United States](#)), said the United States shared the international community's concern about the humanitarian and human rights situation in Gaza and in Israel. It was important to keep both the humanitarian concerns of the Palestinian people and the security of Israeli citizens in mind when considering this complex situation. Both sides bore a responsibility to, at a minimum, ensure against the targeting of civilians as such and to comply with international law. The United States welcomed the opportunity to reiterate that the aspirations of the Israeli and Palestinian peoples for peace and security would never be realized through violence; a better future for both peoples could be realized only by peaceful negotiations. The United States again strongly urged the Human Rights Council to refrain from perpetuating an unbalanced approach to this conflict and the human rights situation in the Palestinian territories that singled out Israel exclusively for criticism. The Council must remain balanced and objective in the pursuit of peace in the Middle East. The United States cautioned against further one-sided resolutions against Israel while ignoring Hamas' responsibility for allowing indiscriminate firing of rockets and mortars into Israeli towns.

ALIREZA MOAIYERI ([Iran](#)) said during the past six decades, a series of massive and systematic human rights and fundamental freedoms violations had occurred in occupied Palestine, the Syrian Golan and Lebanon, and the international community recently witnessed yet another round of atrocities against the defenceless civilians in the Gaza Strip, in severe breach of all international human rights and humanitarian laws. Iran once again strongly condemned the recent Israeli military aggressions against the Gaza Strip, in flagrant breach of international law, especially those pertinent to international human rights and humanitarian laws as well as the Geneva Conventions and constituted genocide, war crimes, and crimes against humanity. The international community should take urgent measures to do whatever was in its power to prevent such atrocities from reoccurring. Occupation lay at the heart of the everlasting crises in the occupied territories, and, unless it was properly addressed, acts of aggression by the occupying Israeli forces and the human rights violations that emanated from occupation could not be brought to an end.

ABDELWAHEB JEMAL ([Tunisia](#)) said that Tunisia had been following with great concern the situation in the Gaza Strip and other Arab occupied territories. All United Nations reports showed how serious the situation was in those territories. The Israeli forces were the only ones responsible for the situation. The settlements, the racist wall, confiscation of land, all of these were factors that showed to which extent Israel scorned the Fourth Geneva Convention. Tunisia considered that the question of Palestine was a priority. Tunisia called on the Council to take the necessary steps to call for international action to protect the rights of the Palestinian people and to force the occupying Israel force to respect international legality.

ABDULATIF HENDI ([Libya](#)) said that each time the Council looked at item seven, they saw that the situation of Palestine was at the top of the list and the situation had only worsened. The Palestinians had been living a real tragedy for the past 60 years. The occupation ran counter to international law and international humanitarian law. The Israeli occupying forces continued to occupy Gaza and the West Bank, and prevented freedom of movement and the arrival of humanitarian assistance to the Palestinian people. Gaza was turned into a collective prison, which was a unique case in history, humanitarian medical assistance and supplies were not permitted into Gaza, and this was an attempt of genocide. When phosphorous bombs were fired into Gaza by Israel, international law called for an end to this situation.

The injustice was unspeakable and called into question the creditability of the Council, which needed to protect its moral and legal status and was responsible for protecting the Palestinian people. Libya called for an investigation into the human rights violations conducted by Israel. There were also flagrant violations taking place in Israeli jails, and statistics recently showed an additional 300 Palestinians, including 50 children had been detained in Israeli prisons. In 2008 former President of the United States Jimmy Carter described the cruel and degrading situation in Israeli prisons.

IBRAHIM SAIED MOHAMED AL-ADOOFI ([Yemen](#)) said the problem of Palestinian prisoners had become a humanitarian problem because of their suffering in Israeli jails, given the flagrant violation of human rights. The figures had increased and continued to do so. Referring to human rights made no sense when the occupation continued, as that was the basic problem. The situation in Gaza was regrettable - it was a collective prison, and the entire international community agreed with this. One and a half million Palestinians lived in this prison, where they were subjected to collective punishment. There was flagrant aggression in December 2008 and January 2009, with many victims, including children, and this and other incidents qualified as crimes against humanity.

KRISTINN F. ARNASON ([Iceland](#)) said that the humanitarian and human rights situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territories was alarming and was made worse by the recent events in Gaza. Iceland condemned Israeli military actions during Operation Cast Lead in Gaza for disproportionate use of force and breaching international humanitarian and human rights law. Iceland had also condemned the firing of rockets from Gaza against Israeli civilians, and Hamas bore a heavy responsibility for drawing civilians into the conflict zone. In a new report, the issue of alleged criminal acts during the recent conflict in Gaza was addressed by this Council's Special Rapporteur. Iceland urged Israel to conduct its own thorough investigation into the allegations, not least in light of recent statements by Israeli Defense Forces soldiers. While the international community must address the humanitarian and human rights situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territories, it must address it in a broader context of imperatives for sustainable peace. Iceland agreed with the Special Rapporteur that without peace there was no sustainable way to improve the situation. The peace process must recommence with the active involvement of the United Nations and the international community.

RONA MOKADDEM ([Lebanon](#)) said all the violations committed by Israel after and before 1967 could not be listed. Israel continued to expand its prisons, enforce collective punishment, demolish homes, and increase the building of Israeli settlements. Israel tried to make the annexation of the Golan a status quo. Israel deprived the Palestinians from returning to their homes. The devastation in Gaza was exacerbated by the imposed blockade, and while that was the case in Gaza, the West Bank suffered in silence with the building of the Wall and road blocks. Israel justified occupation with the security of its citizens, and there was a link being established between security and the legitimacy to resist occupation. Lebanon hoped for peace and stability in the region.

GIANFRANCO FATTORINI, of [Movement against Racism and for Friendship among Peoples](#), said the new Government coalition in Israel carried out a dangerous policy at the national and international level. Since the Council met last September, the international community had witnessed the bombing of Gaza, despite the Special Session last January. The Movement had deposited complaints before the International Criminal Court indicting Israel for war crimes. Every time the Council considered the Israeli question or debated the matter, there were a number of abstentions that were justified because of an imbalance in the text - none of these had suffered the imbalance of the Israeli response. Israel's leaders had no consideration for the international community, nor for the rules of international law, and continued to flout with impunity the fundamental rights of the Palestinian people.

MANSOURI WASSILA, of [General Arab Women Federation](#), in a joint statement with Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, said that it remained gravely concerned about the situation of Palestinian women and children suffering under continued Israeli occupation. There was no evidence of changes in the policies of the occupying power. Israel pursued its military rule in the Occupied Palestinian Territories and imposed unilateral decisions in the occupied Palestinian territories without respect to human rights and disregarding all United Nations resolutions, considering itself above the rule of international law and order. The Israeli occupiers killed and tortured Palestinians with impunity. There was hardly a day that the world did not hear or read of bulldozing Palestinians' homes, of grabbing land, uprooting olive trees, starving and killing Palestinian men, women and children.

HILLEL NEUER, of [United Nations Watch](#), said that they heard a great deal about proportionately and that Israel did not use proportionately. Israel acted in self defense when Hamas launched rockets. United Nations Watch said one should not be fooled by mutations of old biases. There was a lot heard from a number of countries, but this only underscored the double standards within the United Nations system. United Nations Watch asked was it proportional for 21 out of the 27 resolutions adopted by the Council be on Israel; and was it proportional that the Council appointed one agenda item for issues around the world and one entire agenda item for Israel?

SHLOMTSION COHEN, of [Women's International Zionist Organization](#), said the Government of Israel had failed - it had more than just the right to protect its civilians, it had the duty to do so. There could be no talk of disproportionality when Hamas continued to intentionally target civilians, while the Council stayed silent and gave them its implicit consent. Despite all of this, Israeli citizens turned to peace. The Council should acknowledge the suffering of both sides of the conflict, and give the help that was needed so that both sides could give a little in order to gain a lot.

ELIAS KHOURI, of [Union of Arab Jurists](#), said that Israel had occupied the Golan in June 1967 and instead of applying the resolution 242 of the Security Council, Israel had in December 1981 announced that it was annexing the Golan in defiance of legitimate international law. The Israeli occupation had prevented contact of families that lived on both sides of the border. Families were divided and tried to communicate with each other with loudspeakers. Several resolutions of the Human Rights Council had called on Israel to give up this practice of separation. The Union of Arab Jurists also called on the Council to reaffirm the seriousness of this practice which ran counter to international law, in particular international humanitarian law.

KAREN FRANCIS, of [International Organization for the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination](#), said to expose Israel's human rights abuses and attacks on Gaza was not anti-Jewish; criticism based on mountains of reports of human rights violations were not directed at Jews anywhere, but at the policies of the State of Israel. The international community could and should abhor the slaughter of Palestinian women and children without being labeled anti-Semitic. Zionism was a political movement, not a religion; it was colonialist, racist, ideology of conquest, oppression, subjugation and control. Zionism was Israel's official ideology and to oppose the discriminatory policies of this Apartheid State was not racist. Israel was one thing, Judaism another: to confront one was not to be in opposition of the other, they were separate. This agenda item did not report on a religion but on a State's discriminatory policies towards a people who were Semitic too.

KARIM KHALIL, of [Norwegian Refugee Council](#), said in the Occupied Palestinian Territory over 160,000 Palestinians were estimated to have been displaced since 1967. In the Occupied Palestinian Territory, Israel remained the primary perpetrator of arbitrary displacement in contravention of international humanitarian law and human rights law. Internal displacement was the direct result of violence stemming from Israeli incursions and human rights violations perpetrated by the Israeli authorities. Forced displacement had a significant negative impact on peoples' enjoyment of basic rights and their standard of living. Israeli actions had included restrictions of movement and denial of humanitarian access. The State should recognise the de jure and de facto applicability of the Fourth Geneva Convention and international human rights law to the Occupied Palestinian Territory, and allow for unimpeded humanitarian access. The relevant Special Procedures should continue to monitor the situation of victims of displacement and people at risk of displacement.

ABDUL AMIER HASHOM, of [Al-Hakim Foundation](#), said that the world had seen an expansion of Israeli aggression in the Occupied Palestinian Territories. The mayor of Jerusalem had lately stated that a wall would be built around Jerusalem, Palestinian houses would be destroyed and Israeli houses built

which would lead to a further judaisation of the city. Israeli measures allowing access to aid were clearly insufficient. The Council must condemn and put an end to Israel's negative measures which prevented the Palestinian people from the enjoyment of human rights and undermined the peace process.

ABDEL WAHAB HANI, of [Arab Commission for Human Rights](#), said that they admired the courage of the Special Rapporteur and the pertinence of his report, despite the lack of cooperation provided by occupying power. They regretted that the report only existed in English and was circulated late. The Arab Commission said that they protested the detention of Mr. Falk at Ben Gurion Airport by Israeli authorities. The right to resistance of the Palestinian people needed to be exercised inter alia to exercise Palestinian people's right to self-determination. The Arab Commission along with over 450 NGOs on 22 January 2009 asked the International Criminal Court to investigate war crimes committed in Gaza. The Arab Commission called on the Special Rapporteur to consider crimes against peace, with regard to the continued destruction of houses, confiscation of lands and houses, the building of the wall, and the erection of road blocks, among other things, which constituted crimes against peace under the Tokyo Nuremberg Tribunal.

AHMED UDDIN, of [Islamic Human Rights Commission](#), said that being a party to core human rights treaties, the Israel Government had a legal obligation under international human rights and humanitarian law in relation to the rights of Palestinians to self-determination, and their right to establish an independent sovereign State with Jerusalem as a capital. There was deep concern about the grave human rights and humanitarian violations in the West Bank and Gaza by Israeli Defence Forces. It seemed that Israel was trying to punish civilians in the form of collective punishment. Systematic and grave violations of international humanitarian and human rights law by Israel were condemned, and the Council and all members of the international community should meet their obligations under the Geneva Conventions.

LAZARO PARY, of [Indian Movement "Tupaj Amaru"](#), in a joint statement with World Peace Council, [Indian Movement Tupaj Amaru](#), in a joint statement, said that the Israeli occupying power continued with impunity to carry out its aggression, ignoring Human Rights Council and Security Council resolutions. The tragedy of the Palestinian people began with the creation of a Jewish State in 1948, with a resolution which created the Jewish State in arbitrarily partitioning Palestine and covering more than 50 per cent of the Palestinian territory. The Israeli violence against Palestinians included extrajudicial killings and arbitrary detention which was causing much pain in the homes of the suffering and was of course a mockery of the Human Rights Council. The perpetrators should appear before international courts.

Right of Reply

FAYSAL KHABBAZ HAMOUI ([Syria](#)), speaking in a right of reply, said that what Israel said about Syria was misleading. Syria said now the world knew that hundreds of thousands of Palestinians were living in camps in Syria, who had been expelled from Israel more than 60 years ago, and who had been denied their right of return and who were denied their right to recover their possessions and lands. Syria sought to bring peace and stability in the region, and the fact that Israel did not intend to withdraw effectively from the occupied Arab territories, further neutralized the possibility of peace. The world would soon see the racist faces of the leaders of Israel. Some had called for the destruction of dams and many other claims had been made. There could not be any more large scale racism or terrorism than what had already been seen.

For use of the information media; not an official record