
PRESS STATEMENT ON THE RESIGNATION OF THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE COMMISSION OF INQUIRY ON THE 2014 GAZA CONFLICT

Geneva, 3 February 2015 -- The President of the Human Rights Council, Ambassador Joachim Ruecker (Germany), received a letter from Professor William Schabas last night in which Professor Schabas indicates that he is resigning as chair and member of the Commission of Inquiry on the Gaza conflict with immediate effect.

This letter follows one sent to the Council President on Friday, 30 January, by the Permanent Mission of Israel in which they ask for Professor Schabas' dismissal from the Commission of Inquiry due to what they refer to as a conflict of interest. [All communications are available on the [HRC Extranet](#)] The President has accepted the resignation of Professor Schabas and thanks him for his work over the past six months as Chair of the Commission. The President respects the decision of Professor Schabas and appreciates that in this way even the appearance of a conflict of interest is avoided, thus preserving the integrity of the process.

The Human Rights Council President notes the decision taken by the Council requesting the Commission of Inquiry to investigate all alleged violations of international human rights and humanitarian law and he also notes that the Commission is now in the final phase of collecting evidence from as many victims and witnesses as possible from both sides.

The report of the Commission of Inquiry is scheduled to be presented to the Human Rights Council at its upcoming session on 23 March.

The President is currently in discussions with the remaining two members of the Commission of Inquiry to discuss the appointment of the new Chairperson.

Ambassador Ruecker underlines the need to remain focused on the substantive work of the Commission in the interest of the victims and their families on both sides.

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