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COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS
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Item 8 of the provisional agenda**QUESTION OF THE VIOLATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE
OCCUPIED ARAB TERRITORIES, INCLUDING PALESTINE**

Written statement* submitted by the International Organization
for the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (EAFFORD),
a non-governmental organization in special consultative status

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[29 January 2003]

*This written statement is issued, unedited, in the language(s) received from the submitting non-governmental organization(s).

Question of the violation of human rights in the occupied Arab territories, including Palestine

We often speak of racism and of those who are racists. So how in its essence can racism be defined?? In our opinion, racism in its deep and wide meaning is nothing less than the injustice and tyranny a human being inflicts on another while being impulsively driven by selfishness and pride. Forgetting, meanwhile, that what is from earth will return to earth.

All this is not news to anyone because such is the reality we are witnessing today. Many of us ignore that they came from earth and will be returning to earth. Instead, they run impulsively after their selfish and oppressive schemes, unaware of the tragic pain and suffering their injustice inflicts not only on those they despise, but upon themselves as well in the long-run, and history is the best witness.

We often stand in astonishment as we witness in disbelief the actions taken by some that cannot be described except as foolishness and recklessness. For instance, how in the world can a law as Israel's law of return, which allows all Jews, only because they are Jewish, whatever their nationalities or countries of birth are on the world map, to come to Palestine and enjoy full residency rights as Israeli citizens. At the same time, this same discriminating law prohibits millions of Palestinians whether Christians or Muslims from returning to their homes and place of birth and upbringing. They are prohibited from returning to the homeland where their parents and great grandparents lived for thousands of years, for no reason other than because they are not Jewish!!! Isn't this a foolish law indeed? And those who issued this law cannot be described except as racist in every sense?? Jewish members of our organization do not hide their abhorrence and embarrassment of their own people's wrongdoing, especially for having such discriminating and racist law as the law of return.

Another example, which is not any less coercive and damaging, is America's insistence and persistence in enforcing the oppressive and unfair sanctions against the Iraqi people. The ulterior motives for imposing these sanctions are clearly reflective of the offensive and retaliatory political ill-will of American foreign policy. The sanctions lack any objective basis to make it justifiable to the human mind. For years, these sanctions have become a real nightmare for the world's conscience. It is an affront to humanity at large to accept the continuation of these sanctions, which have been imposed to cause tragic suffering and other detrimental effects on a historically distinguished people. The Iraqi people represent one of the most ancient cultures and have shared valuable contributions throughout the stages of civilization with humanity, which we continue to enjoy today. It is sufficient to mention the Sumerian, Babylonian and Assyrian civilizations that flourished in the land of Iraq.

We are surprised how human conscience and world public opinion can accept to live with the idea of seizing the homes, farms, villages, and possessions of thousands of people through force, then to prohibit them after being robbed and victimized by such despicable savagery, from returning to their homeland by a foolish law as the Israeli law of return. An Israeli "law" which has turned United Nations resolutions into a mockery and the biggest joke of the twentieth century. What has become of the partition resolution? What has become of resolution 242, which settles the issue of Eastern Jerusalem?? What have become of resolution 338 and resolution 194 which settle the issue of international obligation to ensure the return of Palestinian refugees to their homes and land?? The United States of America does not firmly insist on carrying out and implementing the resolutions of the Security Council and the General Assembly except when the resolutions impose harsh and inhumane sanctions against Arabs and Muslims only. Isn't this racism in its ugliest forms and manifestation??!

We are astonished how the human conscience and world public opinion can accept to live with the sad reality of such oppressive and unfair sanctions which history has not known the likes before. How can humanity accept the continuation of these brutal sanctions which are imposed on the Iraqi people while the entire world sees and hears of the death of hundreds of children everyday, and as UN officials resign in protest against these sanctions which have resulted in horrific human suffering and a true humanitarian tragedy for the Iraqi people.

Has the conscience of the advanced world died for it not to put an end to this kind of injustice?? Can it be that the advanced world's conscience is not awakened or moved unless the injustice or pain is inflicted upon one of its own of Europe's or America's particular races?? Or is it that its conscience is only capable of reacting to

an agonizing cat caught in a tree branch?? We are astonished and have the right to be so indeed, how this same conscience is not moved by the agony of thousands of mothers in Iraq as hundreds of their children die in their embrace from the lack of food and medicine because of the sanctions imposed by America's politicians, the gods of this pitiful time!!

We are certain that non-governmental organizations, which truly represent the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, are able to make a difference and to stand against this grave injustice that is being committed by one human being against another fellow human being. All we can do is to urge our colleagues and members of all the various organizations representing every race, creed and background to join our firm and strong appeal to put an end to this deviant and unfair situation. We call upon the experts and members of the Commission on Human Rights to issue strong recommendations for the lifting of the sanctions imposed on the people of Iraq, as well as, for an end to Israel's grave violations of Palestinians human rights.
