



STATEMENTS ON BEHALF OF THE EU

HRC 39 - Interactive Dialogue with with the Commission of Inquiry on the 2018 protests in the Occupied Palestinian Territory

39th session of the United Nations Human Rights Council Geneva, 10 - 28 September 2018
EU Intervention: Interactive Dialogue with with the Commission of Inquiry on the 2018 protests in the Occupied Palestinian Territory

Mr President,

The European Union would like to thank the Commission of Inquiry for the oral update pursuant to the resolution adopted at the 28th Special Session of this Council.

At that special session, deeply alarmed by the loss of human lives in the occupied Palestinian Territory, particularly the Gaza Strip, resulting in a high number of Palestinians killed and injured, the European Union expressed grave concern over the escalation of violence and the use of excessive force including live fire.

While recognizing the right to protect its territory, we expect Israel to respect the fundamental right to peaceful protest and the principle of proportionality in the use of force when defending its legitimate security interest. Israeli security forces must refrain from the excessive use of force against unarmed civilians. Lethal use of force should be exercised with maximum restraint, and only as a last resort to protect life. Hamas and those leading the protests in Gaza have a responsibility to avoid provocations and ensure that protests are not misused by extremist elements and remain strictly non-

violent.

We recall that compliance with international humanitarian law and international human rights law by States and non-State actors, including accountability, is a cornerstone for peace and security. An independent and transparent investigation on all alleged violations of international humanitarian law and international human rights law by all parties is needed to understand what happened and why. The Human Rights Council's Commission of Inquiry could contribute to this end and we strongly encourage all parties to cooperate with it.

The humanitarian and human rights situation in the Gaza strip remains of grave concern. All parties must guarantee unimpeded humanitarian access to Gaza for international and humanitarian organisations as well as EU bodies and Member States, and fully cooperate with UN human rights mechanisms. The EU calls on Israel to approve measures to provide immediate relief in Gaza, including facilitating access to medical care, as well as on all competent actors to facilitate the entry of both much needed personnel and medical supplies.

The EU reiterates its longstanding position and calls for all parties to take swift steps to produce a fundamental change to the political, security and economic situation in the Gaza Strip, including the end of the closure and an opening of the crossing points, while addressing Israel's legitimate security concerns.

We also wish to recall the EU's principled position on Item 7. However, the EU believes that it is in the interest of all to ensure full cooperation with and access to UN mechanisms and Special Procedures.

We encourage the Commission to continue its work with impartiality and to investigate violations and abuses of human rights and international humanitarian law from all parties, and would like to ask how in their view these purposes could be best served.

Thank you.

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