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**Human rights situation in Palestine and other
occupied Arab territories**

Joint written statement* submitted by Organization for Defending Victims of Violence, Amman Center for Human Rights Studies, International Council Supporting Fair Trial and Human Rights, Khiam Rehabilitation Center for Victims of Torture, non-governmental organizations 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.

[31 May 2021]

* Issued as received, in the language(s) of submission only.



Item 7: Interactive Dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in the Occupied Palestinian Territories

The world community faces unprecedented levels of violence amid COVID-19 pandemic. Despite of the recently achieved cease fire between Hamas and Israel, the people of Palestine are suffering from a continuous, persistent and systematic crackdown, violence, aggression and mass gross violations of human rights by the Israeli occupying power. They receive little political support of their inalienable rights to self-defense. It appears that the UN and its Member States fail to fulfil their main purpose to maintain international peace and security.

The UN Charter empowers the UN Security Council to counter any threat to international peace and security by an array of means including authorization of military intervention and peace keeping missions. Evidently, it has persistently failed to offer such protection to the people of Palestine. Since 1976, the United States of America has vetoed more than 40 draft resolutions on Israel, including those that sought to condemn Israel for the occupation of Palestine and recognition of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel.

“A sin of omission is a sin committed because of neglecting to do the right. That is, good works left undone. While a sin of commission is typically observable and often more dramatic, sins of omission can do just as much damage.” The impact of the United States’ condoning, protection and support no-matter-what of Israel is so high that it may be equated to be accomplice in its crimes against humanity and war crimes. The acquisition of territory by force is inadmissible under the Charter of the United Nations and that all territories thus occupied must be returned.

While Palestinian people are suffering from another round of crackdown, violence and aggression by the Israeli occupying power, they receive little political support of their inherent right to self-defense and resistance to occupation. Regrettably, the international community for decades has failed to offer effective and adequate protection from clear and blatant violations of the Palestinians’ fundamental rights, including rights to life, peace and personal security by Israel occupying power.

Furthermore, while local civil society activists and human rights defenders put their lives at stake to document the killing, violence and aggression by Israel, Instagram and Facebook encouraged by Israel are blocking and removing the Palestinians’ content under the disguise of countering incitement to violence and terrorism, while in reality being an accomplice with Israel to erase the traces of the recorded and well documented evidence of war crimes and crimes against humanity.

In this regard, we are expressing serious concern over various concerted efforts to prevent the world community from hearing voices from Gaza, through inter alia persistent legacy of the Israeli Security Forces’ attacks against the journalists, civil society activists and human rights defenders. We call on the UN High Commissioner, the Human Rights Council and Special Procedures mandate holders to take effective measures to cease and effectively prevent Israel’s and other efforts in silencing and influencing the social media in preventing the witness testimonies, voices and the video evidence content created by Palestinian people to reach the world community.

The international community cannot continue to stand-by and watch, it must act now to halt occupation, bring international military protection to the people of Palestine or at least take all necessary measures to ensure that Palestinian people can effectively exercise their right to self-defense in accordance with international law. In the numerous UN resolutions and reports of human rights organizations, it is recognized that the Palestinian people have been suffering from continuous intentional discriminative collective punishment, ethnic cleansing, forced evictions, destruction of their property, annexations, occupation, the racist Apartheid policies and behavior of Israel and the violation of all their human rights in the Occupied Palestinian Territories

Likewise, numerous resolutions of the Human Rights Council and General Assembly have repeatedly affirmed the illegal nature of permanent occupation of Palestine but none of them addressed the illegal nature of so called “permanent state of emergency” in Israel that has been abusively used by its military and law-enforcement forces to justify the so called “pre-emptive strikes”, purported “self-defense”, crack down on political opposition critical of Israeli actions and policies, stifling and suffocating the civil society and persecution and killing of human rights defenders and journalists, as well as use of shelling and disproportional military force to kill innocent women and children.

In this regard, we requested the UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian Territory Occupied since 1967 to undertake a study of the exercise of the right to self-defense by people of Palestine and share his findings with the Human Rights Council in his next annual reports to the Human Rights Council and/or General Assembly.

We believe protection of human rights is a generally recognized priority of the United Nations and one of the fundamental principles of international public law. During the holy Ramadan this year, we all observed the tragic events in Palestine, including occupied Jerusalem. It is time for the international community to take decisive action to liberate and protect Palestinian people from Israeli occupation, discrimination, abuse, violence, deprivation of property and violation of the right to freedom of religion or belief.

We welcome the recent resolution of the Human Rights Council adopted by vote on 27 May 2021 and establishment of an independent commission of inquiry on the Occupied Palestinian Territories. We are gravely concerned about the existing lack of consensus and division in the Human Rights Council on OPT created by the cronies of the United States and Israel. We welcome every step that helps to minimize human suffering in Gaza, Jerusalem and West Bank, including delivery of humanitarian aid by every state and every NGO, recognizing simultaneously that due to military presence of Israel, which is used to oppress and abuse people of Palestine, there is clear need for immediate international military deployment on the ground.

The world community should undoubtedly have effective mechanisms to react to mass gross violations by Israel and to punish perpetrators through a concerted action taken by the United Nations as the centralized system to counter the aggression and take all necessary measures in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations.

Recent violence, which was triggered and spread by Israel, put Palestinian people, in particular in Gaza Strip, on the brink of extinction. The recent blatant and ruthless actions by the Israeli Security Forces and its leadership, claiming purported self-defense, forced Palestinian people to experience massive killings of the civilian population, including innocent children and women, and the targeting and destruction of the little remaining from previous attacks on civilian buildings and infrastructures in the Gaza Strip. This all has been done persistently and violently under the disguise of countering and eliminating Hamas’s presence in those targets.

There is thus a clear need to work together and, given the above-mentioned developments and challenges, the world community must take immediate, decisive and proportionate responses to acts of aggression and abuse by Israel to guarantee that human rights and fundamental freedoms are observed. The current situation clearly demonstrates that there is impending need for the fulfilment of the Security Council mandate accordingly.

We urge thus all Member States and international organizations to take decisive actions in full compliance with obligations arising from the Charter of the United Nations, international humanitarian law and international human rights law, as well as other international obligations, to guarantee that the rule of law is observed by Israel and to recognize and enable the State of Palestine to guarantee the well-being of its people and their right to self-defense.
