

Statement by Tehmina Janjua, APR of Pakistan on behalf of the OIC on the Report of the Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in the Palestinian Territories Occupied since 1967

Mr. President,

I have the honour to make this statement on behalf of the Organization of Islamic Conference.

The OIC should like to thank the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian Territories Occupied since 1967, Mr. John Dugard, for his report. It is an authentic testimony based on a visit of the Occupied Palestinian Territory and Israel from 1 to 8 December 2006.

While the Special Rapporteur has presented his report in fulfillment of his mandate on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian Territories Occupied since 1967, it was regrettable that he was not permitted to visit OPT as head of an urgent fact-finding mission to examine the situation following extensive military operations against Palestinians in Gaza. Later another High level Fact Finding Mission was not given permission to visit Beit Hanoun in implementation of resolution S 3/1 of the Third Special Session of the Council.

We appreciate the fact that the Special Rapporteur has reported on situation in Gaza, in Beit Hanoun and in all parts of the OPT.

The Special Rapporteur has reported:

- Military action in Gaza between June and November 2006 that resulted in 400 Palestinian killed and 1500 injured. Of those killed some 90 were children and over three hundred children were injured.
- In Beit Hanoun in Northern Gaza, its forty thousand residents were subjected to the most vicious military action in November 2006. Two seventy nine homes, an 850 old Mosques, public buildings, electricity networks, schools and hospitals were destroyed, orchards leveled roads, water main and sewage networks dug up. A house was targeted killing 19 civilians and injuring 55. There was also evidence of the use of a new and unusual weapon in Beit Hanoun, and elsewhere in Gaza, which has resulted in an increase in amputations.

- Gaza had become a besieged and imprisoned territory as a result of the economic sanctions imposed on the OPT producing a humanitarian crisis.
- Over 80% of population lived below the official poverty line. Living conditions in Gaza were bleak in a society dominated by poverty, unemployment and military assault. The indiscriminate and excessive use of force against civilians and civilian objects, the destruction of electricity and water supplies, the bombardment of public buildings, the restrictions on freedom of movement and the consequences that these actions have had upon public health food, family life and the psychological well-being of the Palestinian people constituted a gross form of collective punishment.
- The Wall presently under construction in Palestinian territory, checkpoints and roadblocks, settlements, an arbitrary permit system, the pervasive practice of house demolition, targeted assassinations, and arrests and imprisonment violate a wide range of civil and political rights.
- There were serious complaints about the treatment, trial and imprisonment of the nine thousand Palestinian prisoners.

Mr. President,

It is a travesty that these violations occur under our very watch. The Human Rights Council cannot remain silent. The Council must speak up for the human rights of the Palestinian people. It should rightly and justifiably demand an end to Israel's continued grave violations of human rights of the Palestinian people and the occupation. We need to agree on measures that should be implemented and which should ensure that Israel abides by international humanitarian and human rights law.

Thank you Mr. President.