

Islamic Republic of

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Permanent Mission to the United Nations

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Statement by:

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before

the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (4th Committee)

on the Item 32:

“Report of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories”

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In the Name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful

Mr. Chairman,

At the outset I would like to express my appreciation to the Chairman and other members of the bureau of the “Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and other Arabs of the occupied territories” that despite many obstacles has prepared an excellent report contained in document A/61/500 to be considered by the Member States in this Committee

Mr. Chairman,

The Islamic Republic of Iran emphasizes the importance of the continuation of the work of the Special Committee to investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories. We believe that it should be able to discharge its mandate and responsibility, as set out in resolution 2443 (XXIII) and subsequent resolutions.

Unfortunately the Special Committee was again deprived of visiting the OPT, and therefore, as in the previous years, it could not access the main sources of information. However, the findings of the

Committee- though insufficient- as well as the statement made by the special Rapporteur on the situation of the human rights in the OPT, at the Third Committee on 19 Oct. 2006, can more or less give us a clear picture on the depth of brutality and inhumane practices exercised by the occupying power, the Israeli regime, against the defenseless civilians in the OPT.

The report contained in document A/61/500 clearly draws the picture of a suffocated open-air prison established and run by Israeli regime- a prison in which you cannot see criminals but innocent peoples, a prison aiming at punishing a nation that is resisting the occupation. In these open-air prison children, women and elderly are deprived of their basic human rights, because they only fight for their essential and inalienable human rights and wish to live on their motherlands free from foreign occupation.

Mr. Chairman,

It is regrettable that the situation in the OPT in 2006 was *again* "worse than ever"- a term that is repeated annually in this Committee to describe the situation in the OPT. As contained in the report A/61/500 and other reports, the military campaign of the occupying power against the people of Palestine continued in 2006 unabated and yet again resulted in horrific human losses and destruction, and created grave humanitarian emergency situation. Israeli regime's atrocious, brutal and callous treatment of the peoples of Palestine and those living in the occupied Syrian Golan in 2006 has been worse than ever. As usual, women and children have been subjected to numerous kinds of Israeli regime's continuous violence and state terrorism, ranging from bombardments, targeted assassination, abduction, property destruction, tear gas, developing post-traumatic disorders such as flashbacks, nightmares and arrests of family members .Moreover, the Israeli regime's brutal policies and practices have exacerbated the already dire economic situation in the OPT, thus, increasing the poverty in the Palestinian and other occupied territories.

Mr. Chairman,

The illegal separation wall that the construction of which is continuing unabated, is a major concern for the international community and a main source of injustice for the Palestinians. The humanitarian impact of the Wall is severe and it is being expanded through other illegal and heinous acts such as confiscation of Palestinians' natural resources and their most fertile agricultural lands, isolating Palestinian communities in enclaves and undermining the territorial contiguity of the Palestinian cities and villages. As a result of construction of the separation wall Palestinians cannot freely access schools, hospitals, places of employment and farms, markets, social networks, etc. This has, in turn, resulted in a new category of internally displaced persons. Indeed, and as mentioned recently by Mr. JOHN DUGARD, the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, these Israeli atrocities amount to ethnic cleansing in other countries but political correctness forbids such language where Israel is concerned.

In short, the illegal separation wall is a primary cause of poverty and the humanitarian crisis in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. It requires the immediate attention of the international community. In this regard we fully support the proposals put forward by the Special Committee in its report contained in document A/61/500 that the Security Council should, by taking necessary measures, ensure that Israeli regime:

- implement the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice and the General Assembly's resolution ES-10/15 of July 2004
- repeal all legislative and regulatory acts adopted in view of the construction of the wall;

- comply with its legal obligation to cease the construction of the wall in OPT, including in and around East Jerusalem;
- immediately dismantle the segments of the wall already built;
- make reparation for the damage arising from the construction of the wall;

Furthermore, we fully support the idea that the Security Council:

- consider sanctions against Israeli regime if it persists in paying no attention to its international obligations, and
- Ensure that other States are not taking any actions to assist this regime in the construction of the wall in OPT, either directly or indirectly, and that bilateral agreements between Israeli regime and other States do not violate their respective obligations under international law;

Mr. Chairman,

As in the previous years, the working conditions of independent journalists including Palestinian journalists in OPT continues to remain very difficult. As referred to in the report of the Special Committee (A/61/500), Palestinian photojournalists and cameramen has often been injured while covering weekly Friday demonstrations against the illegal wall. A Euro News cameraman was severely beaten by an Israeli soldier and had his arm broken. A similar incident occurred on 4 November concerning a journalist from the Qatar-based Al-Jazeera news channel. During the month of July, three journalists were wounded in two separate incidents. On 26 July, a Palestinian TV cameraman was targeted and wounded by an Israeli tank shell while filming civilians caught in the fighting between Palestinian and Israeli Aggressive Forces in Shijaiyah neighborhood of Gaza City.

In this context, we request the Secretary General to seek ways and means to assist the journalists and media in discharging their duties smoothly so that they are able to cover all events in the OPT and let the people all over the World know more about the realities in OPT.

Mr. Chairman,

The Palestinian legislative elections and the government established thereafter on 29 March 2006 were the results of a democratic process. Therefore, increasingly boycotting that government with the aim of paralyzing it, by no means, is justifiable and it is regrettable to see that certain countries still persist on maintaining such an unacceptable approach towards the Palestinian people simply because they have exercised their right to choose their officials through a fully democratic process. In fact, Palestinian people have been punished by certain quarters only because of electing a parliament and a government of their choice. This kind of behavior only emboldens the occupier to commit more crimes and encourages it to increasingly violate the human rights in the OPT.

In conclusion, Mr. chairman, my delegation would like to reiterate its emphasis on the necessity of access to first hand information about the situation in OPT and in this regard fully supports dispatching of the fact-finding mission on the situation of human rights in the OPT by the Special Committee as well as by the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the occupied Palestinian territories on a regular basis. In view of the fact that such missions have never taken place so far, the United Nations should find a way and take necessary measures to facilitate such missions.

Thank you very much Mr. Chairman