



United Nations Human Rights Council: 28th Regular Session
Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies
Oral Intervention: Item 7, General Debate
Monday, March 23rd, 2015

Delivered by: Ms. Dalia Qumsieh

Thank you Mr. President, this statement is made by CIHRS on behalf of the Civic Coalition for Palestinian Rights in Jerusalem, Society of St. Yves- Catholic Centre for Human Rights and the Coalition for Jerusalem. With the illegal annexation of occupied East Jerusalem, Israel has created a deeply unlawful situation. Israel has since 1967 applied a system of domestic laws and policies that result in institutionalized racial discrimination, segregation and oppression of the city's occupied Palestinian population.

Israel carries out a policy of population transfer, with the declared aim of transforming occupied East Jerusalem into a Jewish-Israeli city. To achieve this aim, Israel expands its illegal settlements and simultaneously imposes a series of measures to de-Palestinianize East Jerusalem, including land expropriation, forced evictions, building permit restrictions, home demolitions, denials on freedom of movement and family reunification, and the revocation of East Jerusalem residency status. This has resulted in at least one quarter of Palestinian Jerusalemites being forcibly displaced more than onceⁱ, while Jewish-Israeli settlers now compose approximately 45% of occupied East Jerusalem's populationⁱⁱ.

By closing Palestinian institutions and imposing its own educational system on Palestinian schools, Israel violates additional social, economic, cultural, civil and political rights of Palestinians,

Additionally, the events in occupied East Jerusalem in 2014 indicate an alarming trend toward further state-supported settler violence and measures of collective punishment against the Palestinian population, including arbitrary fines, neighbourhood closures, home raids, mass arrests and detentions, excessive use of force and punitive home demolitions.

We urge the EU and its members to demonstrate their commitment to the rule of law in occupied East Jerusalem by actively participating in the debates under item 7.

In light of Israel's blatant violation of Palestinians' right to self-determination, through the illegal annexation and associated discriminatory laws and policies, we further call on the Council to:

- Create an expert commission to investigate if Israel's system of laws and policies in occupied East Jerusalem satisfies the definitions of forced population transfer, apartheid, and colonialism under international law, with recommendations regarding the legal consequences for third parties; and call on the UN General Assembly to seek an ICJ advisory opinion on this question.
- Re-iterate the call on private businesses to ensure that they are not complicit in Israel's IHL and IHR violations or the maintenance of the illegal situation in occupied East Jerusalem, and on states to provide official guidance for this purpose.

ⁱSource: Unpublished survey commissioned in 2012 by UN OCHA (published with permission of OCHA-oPt).

ⁱⁱ Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS), Israeli Settlements and Land Grab Database 2014.