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**UN Human Rights Council Tenth Regular Session
Item 7 Interactive Dialogue on the
Follow Up of Special Sessions on Beit Hanoun and Gaza**

**Statement by the Delegation of the United States of America
March 23, 2009**

The United States remains concerned about the use of the Human Rights Council as a platform to single out Israel for criticism; the special sessions devoted solely to the human rights situation in Gaza and the Beit Hanoun incident are examples of activities that undermine the credibility and balance that the Human Rights Council should enjoy and exercise.

We share the concerns of many of the delegations in Geneva, including the European Union, that the resolution resulting from the Council's special session only addressed one side of the conflict and made erroneous assertions regarding international law. The United States remains very concerned about the situation in Gaza, and hopes that the appropriate organs of the United Nations can help support a solution that provides for a durable and sustainable cease-fire.

As for the special session and the report of the fact-finding mission on the situation in Beit Hanoun, we respect the work of Reverend Desmond Tutu and appreciate his efforts to ascertain the facts of what happened. The report does dismiss, however, Israel's internal investigation of the events in November 2006. This internal investigation, conducted by the Israeli military, concluded that the shelling of civilians was unintentional.

We continue to urge this Council to exercise caution and balance when addressing the serious human rights issues in Israel and Gaza, and refrain from further unbalanced attacks on Israel.