|  |
| --- |
| **UN Human Rights Council “Commission of Inquiry” on Israel**  **created May 27, 2021 by resolution A/HRC/RES/S-30/1** |

|  |
| --- |
| **Name** (*optional*): Cheryl Charles |
| **Organization** (*optional*): Proclaiming Justice to the Nations – South African Chapter |
| **Biography** (*short description or statement of who you are or your credentials; optional but advisable if identity is not a concern*): |
| **Issue(s) to which your submission applies** (*Mandatory;* *choose one or more by highlighting or repeating at the top of your submission)*:   1. “Underlying root causes of recurrent tensions, instability and protraction of conflict in and between the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem *[sic],* and Israel; as well as systematic discrimination and repression based on national, ethnic, racial or religious identity;” 2. “Facts and circumstances regarding alleged violations of international humanitarian law and alleged violations and abuses of international human rights law leading up to and since 13 April 2021;” 3. “Identification of those responsible;” 4. “Recommendations on accountability measures, with a view to avoiding and ending impunity and ensuring legal accountability, including individual criminal and command responsibility;” 5. “Recommendations on measures to be taken by third States to ensure respect for international humanitarian law in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem *[sic].*” |
| ***Note: this submission in itself should not be understood as an endorsement of the "Commission of Inquiry," including its mandate.***  **Submission:**  **I am a South African Christian and I belong to the “previously disadvantaged” category of citizens who grew up under the Apartheid era and therefore understand the meaning and the implications of that system.**  **The following is a summary of what that meant for non-white South African citizens:**   1. **Minority Rule – a white minority oppressed a black majority** 2. **Race based oppression – which had a notion of white superiority** 3. **Voting – black people had no voting rights** 4. **Education – blacks were subjected to inferior education and quotas were in place for higher education, this was a law.** 5. **Separate Development was enshrined in the Group Areas Act, defining specific areas for specific race groups** 6. **Mixed Marriages – marriage and sexual relationships across colour lines were prohibited by law** 7. **Censorship and suppression of Communism was also prohibited by law**   **All of the above had far-reaching daily implications for us as non-white citizens.**  **I want to inform you, the panel that I have travelled to Israel on many occasions, and I can categorically state that the assertion that Israel is an Apartheid state or claiming that “Apartheid” is happening in Israel is vicious untruth and malicious smear campaign to vilify and deligitimise the state of Israel and Jewish people in the eyes of South Africans as the perpetrators of this lie know full well the devastating implications of “Apartheid” on people who as subjected to that system.**  **In contrast to what we experienced and lived through in South Africa, this is the reality in Israel:**   1. **Minority Rule – No ethnic group or race of people are oppressed** 2. **Race based oppression – the rights of ALL citizens of all races, cultures and religions are protected by the Supreme court** 3. **Voting – Israel is the only Democracy in the Middle where everyone over the age of 18 years – including WOMEN has the right to vote** 4. **Education – All citizens of all races, cultures and religions have full access to ALL education** 5. **Separate Development – All citizens of all races, cultures and religions can live anywhere they want to live** 6. **Mixed Marriages – there are no restrictions in respect to marriages and relationships across race, culture or religion.** 7. **Censorship and suppression of Communism – there is freedom of Press and Communists are represented in the Israeli parliament.**   **So, my question to the members of the “Inquiry” and pointedly to Navi Pillay who understands what Apartheid in South Africa was, is how dare you label the only Democratic nation in the Middle East an “Apartheid” state? By so doing you trivialize and minimize the devastating implications of the Apartheid system that the majority of South Africans were subjected to.**  **The commission of Inquiry would best devote its time to the gross human rights violations committed and still being committed by most of the nations that have requested this inquiry.**  **We as South African Christians DO NOT support our government’s stance on Israel, in fact we strongly urge the Department of International Relations and Cooperation to review its stance as it puts the entire nation of South Africa at the receiving end of curses according to Genesis 12:3 which reads as follows: “**I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you.” |