**Al-Haq, Law in the Service of Man**

June 19, 2017

<https://extranet.ohchr.org/sites/hrc/HRCSessions/HRCDocuments/14/NGO/15966_55_d5e4c252_d1f5_4796_bbf0_3cc3b0133ac0.docx>

**Oral Statement – Al-Haq, Law in the Service of Man**

Item 7 – 35th Session of the Human Rights Council

19 June 2017

Thank you Mr. (Vice-)President,

As we mark fifty years of occupation, Israel’s colonizing ideology remains the same as it was in 1948: to fragment and control as much of historic Palestine as possible while exploiting its natural resources, and to remove the indigenous Palestinian people from their lands.

Over fifty years, Israel has consistently denied Palestinians their right to self-determination and created physical facts on the ground that are tantamount to *de facto* annexation of occupied territory. Yet, the acquisition of territory by war remains inadmissible under international law.

For the past five decades, the international community has stood idly by as Israel transferred 600,000 Israeli settlers into the OPT. While settlers are illegally transferred in, Palestinians are transferred out. In occupied East Jerusalem, at least 14,000 Palestinians have had their residency permits revoked since 1967, despite any changes to the *status quo* in Jerusalem being null and void.

In the Gaza Strip, Israel has created a man-made humanitarian disaster throughout ten years of suffocating closure, in which Israeli assaults and bans on the entry of essential goods have become a grim reality. Should current conditions persist, the UN itself has estimated that the Gaza Strip will become uninhabitable by 2020.

Mr. (Vice-)President,

Al-Haq calls upon the international community to finally take concrete action and use all means at its disposal to end Israel’s military occupation and colonization of Palestinian territory. Five decades is enough; it is time for action.

Thank you.