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STATEMENT

BY

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UNDER AGENDA ITEM 31

**REPORT OF THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE TO INVESTIGATE
ISRAELI PRACTICES AFFECTING THE HUMAN RIGHTS
OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE AND OTHER ARABS
OF THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES**

**NEW YORK
8 NOVEMBER 2005**

Mr. Chairman,

Allow me, on behalf of my delegation, to extend our appreciation and thanks to H.E. Mr. Prasad Kariyawasam, Chairman of the "Special Committee to investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and other Arabs of the Occupied Territories", and to other members of the committee for the report in document A/60/380 submitted pursuant to the General Assembly resolution 59/121. The report contains valuable information and recommendations that my delegation fully supports.

Since its establishment in 1968 by General Assembly resolution 2443, the Special Committee continues to do its commendable work under very difficult conditions. It provides and updates the Fourth Committee with relevant information regarding human rights violations in the Palestinian and other Arab Territories by Israel, the occupying power.

Mr. Chairman,

Whereas others are questioning the existence of the Special Committee, my delegation wants to make it clear once again, that the existence of this Committee which was created with a clear purpose and mandate, is still valid. It is therefore imperative that the Committee continues with its work of exposing those inhuman policies and activities, as long as illegal occupation and human rights violation still exist in the Occupied Territories. It is regretted however, that the Israeli authority does not cooperate with the Special Committee. It is disheartening to hear that like in the past years, during its field Mission to the Middle East, the Special Committee was denied access by Israel to visit the Occupied Palestinian Territory despite a prior request for the visit. It is however clear that, the occupying power is aware that allowing the Special Committee to visit the Occupied Territories will offer it an opportunity to collect sufficient material evidence regarding the human rights situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territories. My delegation therefore calls upon the Government of Israel to cooperate with the Special Committee, thereby allowing it to perform its work without hindrances.

Mr. Chairman,

My delegation is happy to note that despite these obstacles, the Special Committee managed to visit some countries in the region whereby it had an opportunity to meet with leaders of those countries and had fruitful exchange of views. At the same time, Committee members were able to interview witnesses who provided them with first hand account of evidences of human rights violations in the occupied territories.

Mr. Chairman,

The humanitarian and human rights situation is increasingly deteriorating in the face of the continuous military occupation, which represents the fundamental source of tension in the Middle East. It is regrettable that despite all efforts by the United Nations and the international Community to bring peace to the Middle East, violence still continues unabated claiming many lives of innocent civilians, especially children, women and the elderly. Over the past 5 years, more than 3750 Palestinians have been killed as a result of the continued illegal practice of extra-judicial executions. These figures continue to rise day-by-day.

In its report, the Special Committee underlined that more than ever; the construction of the Separation Wall violates every single human right of the Palestinians.

Israel's continuous construction of such a Wall despite the legal advice by the International Court of Justice (ICJ) issued on 9 July 2004 and the General Assembly resolution ES-10/15 of 12 July 2005, is a clear indication that the Occupying Power does not live up to her obligations under international law. Though its unilateral withdrawal from Gaza is viewed as a positive move, it is not in conformity with the Road Map and therefore evades the Road Map, which presents the only realistic and viable two states solution.

All these measures taken by Israel are directed to change the physical character, demographic composition and institutional structure or status of the Palestinian territories, thus constituting a flagrant violation of the Fourth Geneva Convention and also constituting a serious impediment to achieving a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in the Middle East.

Mr. Chairman,

The Palestinian People have been denied their right to self-determination, their right to freedom of movements and all rights enshrined in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. They are subjected to collective punishment and systematic humiliation by the occupying power in their daily lives. As we embrace for “larger freedom and human rights for all”, the people of Palestine look upon the international community and in particular, the United Nations which has a particular responsibility towards the solution of the question of Palestine in all its aspects, to come to their rescue.

The Report of the Special Committee is today before this Fourth Committee before action is taken. It is imperative therefore that the international community acts now, before it is too late.

Finally, **Mr. Chairman, let me** reiterate my delegation’s unwavering support and solidarity with the people of Palestine in their just cause for freedom, independence and social justice.

I thank you,