

International Day of Solidarity with the People of Palestine

Statement by the Representative of the UN Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories

29 November 2022

Madam Director-General,

I am honoured to address this special meeting to commemorate the International Day of Solidarity with the People of Palestine, as the Representative of the Special Committee to investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestine People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories.

The year 2022 marks the 45th anniversary since the General Assembly established the International Day of Solidarity with the People of Palestine in 1977. Today, we stand in solidarity with the international community and with the people of Palestine, as always, in seeking ways for a peaceful, just and equitable solution to the question of Palestine and most importantly to address the plight of the Palestinian people, particularly its women and children and to provide for their humanitarian needs.

Madam Director-General,

The Committee undertook its annual mission to Amman, Jordan, from 4 to 7 July 2022. This year's visit took place in the context of what has been described as increasing settler violence. Prior to this mission, the Committee engaged in a week of meetings in Geneva. Both in Amman and in Geneva, the Special Committee heard the testimonies of experts, high-level Palestinian government officials, UN organizations and representatives of civil society organizations from the occupied Palestinian

territory and the occupied Syrian Golan. Furthermore, the Special Committee visited the UNRWA headquarters, Marka refugee camp and interacted with the Palestine refugees. These interactions highlighted, once again, the daily violence and sufferings of the Palestinian people, whose every aspect of life continues to be controlled by the unlawful occupation.

The Committee sincerely thanks all those who took time to provide the Committee with information and to share their views, perspectives and experience before the Committee.

Madam Director-General,

The Committee was informed that in the first half of 2022, 60 Palestinians were killed in the West Bank. 575 incidents of violence resulted in Palestinian deaths, injury and / or property damage between 1 June 2021 and 31 May 2022. The Committee remains deeply concerned of reports that families of Palestinians killed continue to be deprived of closure with proper and dignified burials denied.

Settlement expansion has continued, with demolitions of Palestinian-owned structures and displacement of the Palestinian residents, notwithstanding the relevant UN Security Council resolutions. As reiterated by the Secretary-General, the Security Council and other UN bodies, settlement activities are a flagrant violation of international law and therefore must immediately cease. According to the information received by the Committee, about 1,200 residents of Masafer Yatta face imminent risks of forced evictions and displacement and would constitute the largest displacement of Palestinians since 1967.

The Committee appeals to the occupying powers to act with restraint and to ensure that the human rights of all the people of Palestine and other

Arabs in the Occupied Territory are protected as well as to guarantee access to humanitarian assistance.

According to information received by the Committee, Israeli practices of land, sea and air blockade in the Gaza Strip and closures have effectively deprived Palestinians of access to basic needs such as food, safe drinking water, health and sanitary facilities, education and right to legal representation among others. The blockade and closures, combined with the effects of the May 2021 conflict and the COVID-19 pandemic, have continued to stifle the local economy.

We are concerned of the reports in the increase in the number of arrests of fishermen, harassment, and confiscation or destruction of their boats during the year 2022. Testimonies placed before the Committee, report that they are often subject to ill-treatment and physical abuse, and not allowed to contact their families. Entry and export of goods are strictly controlled and restricted. Gazans requiring urgent medical care outside the Gaza Strip are unable to do so without exit permits.

Madam Director-General,

I acknowledge with deep appreciation the work done by UNRWA to provide care and assistance to Palestinian refugees for over 7 decades. The Committee takes note of the status of UNRWA and requirement for predictable and sustainable funding in order to continue to fulfil its mandate to Palestine refugees and contribute towards regional stability.

The Committee joins hands with the International Community in seeking a just, sustainable and genuine resolution to the question of Palestine, with the attainment of a two-State solution based on 1967 borders. We call for an end to the suffering of the Palestine people.

The Committee appeals to all concerned parties to create the necessary environment to facilitate confidence-building in support of efforts to resume dialogue and negotiations. We encourage constructive engagement, in good faith, and to look beyond the herculean task in order to forge a sustainable solution to the question of Palestine.

On this International Day of Solidarity with the people of Palestine, the Committee continues to be encouraged by the courage and strength of purpose of the people of Palestine that has prevailed over considerable challenges. We continue to be inspired by their resilience and endurance and reaffirms our steadfast support of their cause to gain their legitimate rights and aspirations towards building a future of peace, justice, security and dignity.

Thank you