Press Briefing Notes on Israel and Democratic Republic of the Congo

April 10, 2015

United Nations Human Rights Office

http://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=15817&LangID=E

**(1) Israel**

We are concerned at the continued and increasing use of administrative detention by Israeli authorities against Palestinians. Administrative detainees are held without charge or trial, often on the basis of secret evidence, for periods of up to six months, which are extendable indefinitely. Detainees are also often transferred to prisons inside Israel in violation of the Fourth Geneva Convention.

Most recently, Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC) member Khalida Jarrar was arrested on April 2 and subsequently detained pursuant to an administrative detention order issued by an Israeli military commander in the West Bank on Sunday April 5. Jarrar remains in administrative detention in a prison in Israel. The order is currently under review by the Ofer Military Court in the West Bank. If confirmed, Jarrar would be subjected to six months detention, without charge or trial, renewable indefinitely.

This is not the first time Jarrar has been subject to administrative orders by the Israeli military commander in the West Bank. On 20 August 2014, Jarrar received a military order giving her 24 hours to move from Ramallah, where she lives, to the district of Jericho where her movements would be restricted for six months. On appeal, an Israeli court reduced the restriction to one month.

The Israeli practice of administrative detention has been condemned on numerous occasions by the UN Human Rights Office and the Human Rights Committee that oversees implementation of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which Israel has ratified. However, as of February this year, there were reportedly 424 Palestinians held under administrative detention orders – more than double the 181 held at the same time last year.

We call, once again, on Israel to end its practice of administrative detention and to either release without delay or to promptly charge all administrative detainees and prosecute them with all the judicial guarantees required by international human rights law and standards.

(2) Democratic Republic of the Congo Serious allegations regarding the presence of a mass grave holding 421 bodies in Maluku commune, Kinshasa province were received by the UN Joint Human Rights Office in the Democratic Republic of the Congo\* last month. The Office has since been working closely with the authorities over the past few weeks, including by supporting the judicial investigation into these very serious allegations. We are also conducting our own independent human rights investigation, including by carrying out site visits and interviewing witnesses and family members of victims. We will continue to support the Government and urge them to ensure that the judicial investigation is promptly completed in a transparent, credible and independent manner.

\* The United Nations Joint Human Rights Office (UNJHRO), established in February 2008, comprises the Human Rights Division of the UN Stabilization Mission in the DRC (MONUSCO) and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in the DRC (OHCHR-DRC). - See more at: http://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=15817&LangID=E#sthash.lQ94HyrM.dpuf