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Mr. Chairman,
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to introduce five reports submitted under agenda item 53.

Let me start with the report of the Secretary-General on the **Work of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories**, document A/67/511. The report covers the period of August 2011 through July 2012, and outlines the activities undertaken by the Special Committee during this period and by the Department of Public Information in support of the work of the Special Committee.

To prepare the second report, on the **Applicability of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949, to the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the other occupied Arab territories**, document A/67/332, notes verbales were sent to the Government of Israel and all High Contracting Parties to the Fourth Geneva Convention, requesting information. For the second consecutive year, no response was received to these notes verbales.

Moving now to the **Report of the Secretary-General on Israeli settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the occupied Syrian Golan**, document A/67/375: This report is based on monitoring carried out by the human rights office in the occupied Palestinian territory, as well as on information received from OCHA in the occupied Palestinian territory, and from Israeli and Palestinian non-governmental organisations. The report describes human rights issues related to Israeli settlement activities and violence by Israeli settlers. It focuses on how Israeli policies and practices related to settlements in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, lead to the violation of the right to self-determination of the Palestinian people.

The report calls on Israel to comply with its international legal obligations and its commitments in the Road Map, in particular by ceasing the transfer of its civilian population to the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and beginning the process of re-integrating its settler population within its own territory. It also calls on Israel to prevent attacks by Israeli settlers against Palestinian civilians and otherwise fulfil its obligation to maintain public order in the West Bank, and to investigate all serious allegations concerning criminal acts committed by settlers or its security forces.

In his report, the Secretary-General notes that Israel's violation of Palestinians' right to self-determination is a matter of concern to all States.

The fourth report of the Secretary-General under this item addresses **Israeli practices affecting the human rights of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem**. This report is based primarily on monitoring carried out by the human rights office in the occupied Palestinian territory. It also contains information from other United

Nations entities, Israeli, Palestinian and international nongovernmental organizations, and media sources.

The main concerns addressed in this report are the blockade of Gaza; firing of rockets from Gaza toward Israel; excessive use of force by Israeli security forces in the West Bank; Israel's practice of arbitrarily detaining Palestinians under a regime of administrative detention; and Israeli efforts to alter the character, status and demographic composition of the occupied Palestinian territory, in particular through evictions and demolitions and the continued construction of the Wall.

The report reiterates the call on Israel to:

- lift the blockade of Gaza and ensure sufficient imports for reconstruction and exports to re-invigorate the economy;
- prevent excessive use of force, especially with respect to crowd control in the West Bank, and respect Palestinians' right of assembly;
- review the policy and practice of administrative detention, with a view toward ending the practice; to bring its policies and practices related to the detention of children into line with international law; and
- desist from forcibly transferring civilians and carrying out home demolitions in the West Bank.

The last report, on the **occupied Syrian Golan**, document A/67/338, summarizes notes verbales received from Permanent Missions concerned, as the human rights office has not had access the occupied Syrian Golan and, therefore, has been unable to monitor or independently verify allegations of human rights violations in that territory.

This year, responses were received from the Permanent Missions of the Syrian Arab Republic, Algeria, Argentina, Qatar and the Sudan. As in previous years, no response was received from Israel.

The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic reiterated its requests for the withdrawal of Israel and its condemnation of human rights violations committed by Israel, and urged Israel to allow free movement between the occupied Syrian Golan and the Syrian Arab Republic. Algeria, Argentina, Qatar and Sudan expressed their support to Syria's claims over the occupied Syrian Golan and stated that they do not recognize any of the legislative measures taken by Israel in the occupied Syrian Golan, in line with Security Council resolution 497 of 1981.

With this, Mr. Chairperson, I conclude my introduction of some of the reports submitted under agenda item 53.

Thank you.
