

Cuba
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Mr. Chairman:

I have the high responsibility to address the Human Rights Council under agenda item 7 on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

The Human Rights Council meets to consider a human rights situation that demands the most urgent attention by the international community. Indeed, this most recent chapter in the extensive history of aggressions and human rights violations by Israel against the Palestinian people must be strongly rejected; and measures should be taken to hold the responsible accountable for its acts, as well as to prevent the repetition of such acts in the future.

The Sixth Special Session of the Council held on January 2008, in light of the situation in the occupied Palestinian territory, strongly confirmed the determination of the international community to put an end to grave violations on human rights victimizing thousands of men, women and children. Regrettably, no improvements on this matter were achieved.

Mr. Chairman:

The NAM Coordinating Bureau adopted last 29 February a Statement on the current situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including east Jerusalem. Cuba will circulate that statement as official document of this session, *under this agenda item.*

The Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) strongly condemns the recent military assaults by Israel, the occupying Power, against the

Palestinian civilian population in the Gaza Strip, which have resulted in the killing of at least 120 Palestinians and the serious wounding of more than 300 other people, including several children and women.

NAM also condemns the unlawful decision by Israel to maintain closed the border crossings that lead to and from Gaza, as well as the interruption of basic supplies, including fuel, which have caused huge humanitarian consequences for the Palestinian population, and have affected the functioning of basic services such as hospitals, ^{Siwich} sewage treatment and water facilities, among others, causing a high number of both direct and indirect victims.

The persistence and further deterioration of the situation of violations of human rights in the occupied Palestinian territory is of grave concern to the NAM.

The violent military escalation by Israel constitutes a grave breach of international law, including humanitarian and human rights law, fuels the cycle of violence, and threatens international peace and security as well as the fragile peace process between the two sides.

→ Such actions by Israel exacerbate the ^{dire} dire humanitarian situation on the ground in the Gaza Strip, where the civilian population continues to be collectively punished under a crippling siege.

Mr. Chairman:

The NAM strongly condemns the fact that the Palestinian people continue to suffer under the prolonged and brutal Israeli military occupation of their land since 1967 and continue to be denied their fundamental human rights, including the right to self-determination and the right of the Palestinian refugees to return.

We are gravely concerned about the serious deterioration of the humanitarian situation on the ground as a result of the ongoing unlawful policies and practices being carried out by Israel against the Palestinian people, including continuing grave human rights violations and reports of war crimes.

The Non-Aligned Movement has called upon the international community, especially the Security Council, to assume its responsibilities and to call upon Israel, the occupying Power, to immediately cease its violations and to comply with its obligations under international law and all relevant United Nations resolutions.

Mr. Chairman:

The Human Rights Council can not ignore the ^{fait} fate of hundreds of thousands of Palestinians whose most basic human rights are being violated on a daily basis by Israel, the Occupying Power.

As it is clearly demonstrated by the decision to expedite the consideration of agenda item 7 during the Seventh Session of the

Human Rights Council, this Body has a very important role to play in the efforts to put an end to Israel's continuous impunity and to restore the full enjoyment of all human rights on the ground. Israel, the Occupying Power, has to comply with all the Council's resolutions on the situation of human rights in the Occupied Arab Territories.

At the same time,

The human rights situation in the occupied Syrian Golan is ~~also~~ deteriorating as a direct result of the Israeli occupation. The occupations' illegal practices continue to violate the civil, political, economic, social, and cultural rights of the Syrian population there. ~~At the same time,~~ We are also deeply concerned at Israel's threats towards Lebanon.

Concrete actions should be taken. In this regard, the members of the NAM express our hope that the draft resolutions that will be ^{presented} ~~adopted~~ on the issue under agenda item 7 will be adopted with the widest possible support of the members of this Council.

At this critical juncture, the NAM expresses its strong solidarity with the Palestinian people, and reaffirms its long-standing principled positions calling, *inter alia*, for an end to the illegal Israeli occupation continuing since 1967 of the Palestinian and other Arab lands, including the occupied Syrian Golan and the establishment of an independent State of Palestine with East Jerusalem as its capital.

Thank you