

OIC Statement by Ambassador Zamir Akram Permanent Representative of Pakistan, on behalf of the OIC, on "Follow-up of the Special Session on Palestine and other Occupied Arab Territories", during the 11th Session of the Human Rights Council, Geneva, 15 June 2009

Mr. President,

I am making this statement on behalf of the Member States of the OIC.

The OIC would like to thank your efforts in constituting a very able independent International Fact Finding Mission. We also thank the update you have provided to the Council on the ongoing activities of this Mission. We however, regret to note that yet another Mission mandated by this Council has failed to acquire any semblance of cooperation from Israel, the occupying power. Israel has always obstructed independent and impartial investigation of such concerns as much and as long as it is possible. It indeed confirms its arrogance that continues to disregard the concerns and opinion of international community for decades. Consistent denial to comply with the UN and HRC resolutions is a challenge to the conscience of the international community, which is yet to be answered in an appropriate manner.

At the same time we do note that the Independent International Fact Finding Mission was finally able to get to Gaza from Egypt and was able to establish initial contacts with the concerned including representatives of International Organizations and specialized agencies, representatives of NGO's and relatives of the victims and witnesses as well as to physically witness the damage caused to people and infrastructure. This will surely help them establish relevant facts and carry out their mandated tasks.

We further hope that the IIFFM will also be able to complete the second phase of their task i.e. that includes public hearings sessions in Gaza and meeting other officials from West Bank and Jerusalem, hence be able to report on all Israeli violations of human rights in all the OPT including Jerusalem. Every member of this Mission is recognized for his / her independence, professionalism and objectivity. We hope they will be able to carry out their mandate in a comprehensive manner and are able to report to this Council on their findings in the next session.

Mr. President,

We also thank ^{the} ~~Madam~~ High Commissioner for the oral update she has presented to the Council on the activities of her staff and Office in relation to the follow up of specific request made in OP 11 of resolution HRC/S-9/1. We have taken due note of the expansion in the OHCHR's office in OPT that shall contribute to effective

investigations and documenting Israeli human rights violations against Palestinian people in Occupied Palestinian Territory.

~~or do not intend to be done~~
This, however, does not replace the mandate of submitting periodic reports. As regards the decision to postpone the due periodic report to September session we expect that this report will be duly updated to include factual state on ground till September. We further hope that due attention will be given to this important issue and periodic reports will be submitted regularly to the Council sessions.

At the same time, Mr. President, we would have greatly appreciated if the member states were provided with at least the copies of your and ~~Madam~~^{the} High Commissioner's oral update, in advance. It would have greatly contributed to an informed discussion instead of merely reiterating known positions.

In conclusion, Mr. President, we hope that today's debate would once again be utilized by member states to urge Israel to extend maximum cooperation to the IFFM to carry out its mandated tasks. ~~Indeed such cooperation is also important to assuage Israeli own concerns of biased focus and reporting. We hope rhetoric will be replaced by real action and IFFM will have the opportunity to investigate all concerns from all sides~~ in an independent and impartial manner.

I thank you Mr. President.