

Statement by ambassador Zamir Akram, Permanent Representative of Pakistan, on behalf of the OIC, in the General Debate under agenda item 7, during the 11th Session of the Human Rights Council, Geneva, 16 June 09

Mr. President,

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

The OIC remains concerned over the deteriorating humanitarian and human rights situation in Palestine and other Occupied Arab Territories. Palestinians continue to face military intervention and occupation, extra-judicial and targeted assassinations; restriction on movement; and demolition of houses and infrastructure. Continued arbitrary detentions; persistence and strengthening of the separation wall; executions, abductions, and disappearances; the widespread practice of torture; and other human rights abuses are the way of life that Palestinians are forced to live with.

While the world continues to helplessly watch happenings in the Middle East, generations of Palestinians have bravely weathered violations of all of their human rights at the hands of Israel, the occupying power. Over the last four decades, Israel has pursued the policy of disproportionate force, deliberate destruction of infrastructure and killing of civilians to silence the voice of occupied Palestinians. Suffering insults at the hands of Israeli soldiers while trying to cross checkpoints is a daily routine. They are also subjected to targeted killings and forced evictions to make room for Israeli settlements.

At the end of last year, while the world marked the anniversaries of the adoption of two important human rights documents i.e. Universal Declaration of Human Rights and Vienna Declaration, Israel unleashed a reign of terror

and repression in Gaza through its military might and massacred over 1400 civilians including women, children and elderly. This is not to mention thousands of injured who still continue to suffer from this brutality. As if this was not enough, Israeli forces also attacked and destroyed UN buildings, reminding the international community of Israel's utter disregard for international law and opinion.

All special rapporteurs and independent observers have widely reported and criticized human rights violations by Israel. Implementation of the resolutions adopted by the Council would at least bring some relief to the deteriorating human rights and humanitarian situation in OPT. In this context, the OIC also supports the recent recommendations made by nine Special Procedures.

The human rights violations in the Occupied Syrian Golan also continue with no end in sight. The occupying power continues to disregard the International Humanitarian Law and the International Human Rights Law with total impunity. In fact, the Israeli delegation takes pride in saying that the Council can adopt as many resolutions as it likes but they will implement none of them. This is at a time when the Syrian prisoners continue to suffer from torture and degrading treatment in the Israeli jails.

Mr. President,

If violence and retaliation is to be effectively countered, the international community will need to step up its efforts to end Israeli occupation of OPT and other Arab territories, which is the root cause of all violence, insecurity and instability in the region. The Council must call on Israel to respect its obligations and responsibilities as an occupying power in accordance with

International Law, International Human Rights Law, International Humanitarian Law, and 4th Geneva Convention applicable in OPT including East Jerusalem as well as to urge it to extend maximum cooperation to the IIFFM. Israel should support, not undermine, an amicable solution of the Palestinian issue on the basis of the Security Council resolutions and the Quartet's Road Map.

This Council and the international community need to act decisively to end the suffering of the Palestinian people and help them exercise their fundamental right to self determination to establish their sovereign independent state of Palestine with Alquds alshareef as its capital.

I thank you Mr. President.