

**STATEMENT BY**

**HIS EXCELLENCY MR. SAVIOUR BORG**

**RAPPORTEUR**

**COMMITTEE ON THE EXERCISE OF THE INALIENABLE**  
**RIGHTS OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE**

**INTRODUCING THE REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE**  
**TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

Agenda item 16: Question of Palestine  
64th session of the General Assembly

*30 November 2009*

Mr. President,  
Excellencies,  
Ladies and gentlemen,

It is an honour for me, in my capacity as Rapporteur of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, to present to the General Assembly the annual report of the Committee, contained in document A/64/35. Allow me to summarize each section of the report.

The report covers, in **Chapters I through III**, the Committee's objectives and its general perspective on the events that have taken place in the course of the year. It also summarizes the General Assembly mandates of the Committee, and contains information on the organization of the Committee's work during the year.

Under **Chapter IV**, the report reviews the situation relating to the question of Palestine as monitored by the Committee during the year and contains a detailed factual account of events that have taken place in the reviewed period.

**Chapter V** reviews the action taken by the Committee, including the Chairman's participation in General Assembly and Security Council debates, statements issued by the Committee and its Bureau, and the continued dialogue between the Committee and members of the European Union and other intergovernmental organizations. The Chapter also reports on the various international meetings and conferences organized by the Committee, as well as other mandated activities carried out by the Division for Palestinian Rights.

**Chapter VI** provides an overview of the work done over the year by the Department of Public Information in pursuance of General Assembly resolution 63/28 of 26 November 2008.

The last chapter of the report contains the **Conclusions and Recommendations of the Committee**.

In this chapter, the Committee notes that the actions of the IDF during "Operation Cast Lead" in the Gaza Strip have led to serious allegations of violations of international humanitarian law and, possibly, war crimes. The Committee commends the work of the various investigative missions and, at the same time, expresses its dismay over an almost complete denial by Israel of breaking the rules governing the conduct of war and deplores the lack of Israeli cooperation with some of these commissions. The Committee expresses its view that the perpetrators of serious crimes on either side have to be brought to justice and held accountable for their actions, and calls for the recommendations contained in the various reports to be implemented.

The Committee also expresses its dismay about the suffocating blockade of the Gaza Strip continued to be imposed by Israel, after it had caused thousands of casualties among the civilian population and massive destruction of Palestinian homes, property and infrastructure

during the offensive. The Committee reminds Israel, the occupying Power, of its obligation under the Fourth Geneva Convention to protect the civilian population under its occupation and to act within the ambit of international law. The Committee recommends that the international community consider strengthening respect of international humanitarian law by creating appropriate mechanisms to monitor adherence, and that the High Contracting Parties take, individually or collectively, the measures they deem appropriate to ensure respect for the Convention, including through the convening of a High Contracting Parties conference to address the subject of respect and ensuring respect for the Convention.

The Committee also expresses its serious concern over Israel's ongoing settlement activity and reiterates that the presence of settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, is illegal under international law. The Committee also expresses its concern about the accelerated creation of faits accomplis in East Jerusalem, including recent policy statements and illegal unilateral measures by the Government of Israel. The Committee reiterates that East Jerusalem is part of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, and that a negotiated solution of the question of Jerusalem, based on international law, is absolutely essential to resolving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and crucial for a durable peace in the whole region.

Moreover, the Committee denounces the continued construction of the wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and recommends that the international community take more determined action challenging the presence of the wall.

The Committee also emphasizes the useful and constructive contribution of the Division for Palestinian Rights in support of its mandate. It also expresses its view that that the programme of international meetings and conferences implemented by the Division contributes to focusing the attention of Governments, intergovernmental and civil society organizations and the public on the urgency of bringing about the two-State solution and mobilizing assistance to the Palestinian people. The Committee intends to further generate wide support for a peaceful solution of the conflict based on international law and relevant United Nations resolutions through its programme of international meetings and conferences for 2010. The Committee will reach out, with the assistance of the United Nations entities on the ground, to the people most affected by the status quo, refugees, Palestinians living under occupation, and to members of the Israeli public to involve them in the search for solutions, to promote dialogue and common projects and to win their backing of a settlement negotiated by their leaders and supported by the international community. The Committee wishes to contribute to efforts towards ending incitement on both sides, provide a venue to have the narratives heard and reconciled and to promote, with the help of civil society, peace education on the ground. It will pay particular attention to the empowerment of women and their organizations in this process.

The Committee also commends civil society organizations for their support of the Palestinian people and lauds the courageous advocacy actions of numerous activists, including parliamentarians, who participate in demonstrations against the wall, provide assistance to Gaza and keep their home constituencies informed about the harsh realities of life under occupation. The Committee will continue to assess its programme of cooperation with civil society and consult them on ways to enhance their contribution. The Committee also commits to further

developing its cooperation with parliamentarians and their umbrella organizations, who have a special responsibility to ensure that their Governments actively promote and support the realization of a two-State solution, and ensure respect for international law, in accordance with their international obligations.

Lastly, the Committee expresses its view that the special information programme on the question of Palestine of the Department of Public Information has made an important contribution to informing the media and public opinion of the relevant issues, and it requests the continuation of the programme with the necessary flexibility.

In closing, I would like to express the hope that the report I just presented will be of assistance to the Assembly in its deliberations on the question of Palestine.

Thank you, Mr. President.

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