

Canada

**Statement in Explanation of Vote for the
Draft Decision entitled "Human Rights Situation in Palestine and
other Occupied Arab Territories"
UN Human Rights Council**

Mr. President,

Less than two weeks ago our Ministers stood before this Council expressing the international community's willingness to create a strong and effective new body with the right structures and procedures that will mark a fresh start in the United Nations efforts to promote and protect all human rights in all countries. The Secretary General of the UN, Mr. Kofi Annan, in his opening address to the Council, argued convincingly that for the body to succeed, "the Council's work must mark a clean break from the past".

Universally, we heard the call for the new Council to use enhanced cooperation and dialogue to bring about improvements in the implementation of human rights. This delegation believes that the Human Rights Council must adhere to this challenge. It must be able to deal with complicated issues through a more constructive and productive approach.

It is for this reason that we are disappointed to see this draft decision before the Council. Earlier this week, as agreed, the Council debated a number of issues, including this one. We and other delegations put forward concrete proposals for further follow-up and consideration by the Human Rights Council. Our hope, expectation and understanding was that this discussion would be reflected in a consensus-based Council statement. It is most unfortunate, therefore, that this one-sided draft decision was introduced rather than striving for agreement on a consensus statement.

The Secretary General appealed to members of the Council to “recognize the importance of universality and objectivity...and the need to eliminate double standards.”

We are disappointed with the procedure through which this issue has been introduced and we do not accept the singling out of one specific situation by the Council. Therefore, Canada will vote against this draft decision.