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**Human rights situation in Palestine and other
occupied Arab territories**

Written statement* submitted by International Council Supporting Fair Trial and Human Rights, a non- governmental organization in special consultative status

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[31 May 2021]

* Issued as received, in the language(s) of submission only.



Ensure accountability and justice for all violations of international law and war crimes in the Occupied Palestinian Territories

Racism within Israeli law influences directly all aspects of the Palestinians' lives. These racist laws aim to plunder the Palestinians property and steal their land. Sheikh Jarrah neighborhood is a victim of the racist "Absentee Property" law that was passed in 1950 to be the main tool for controlling Palestinian property.

Tensions between Palestinian demonstrators and the Israeli occupation police began on May 6, 2021, as a result of the Israeli Supreme Court's decision regarding the eviction of Palestinian families from their homes in the Sheikh Jarrah neighborhood to the eastern side of the Old City of Jerusalem in favor of housing Israeli settlers. The court based its ruling on a property law passed by Israel in the 1950s, which stipulates that Jewish refugees have the right to claim homes even if these are not the families who lived there. The 1950 Israeli law prohibits Palestinians from reclaiming property lost in the 1947-1949 war, while the 1970 law allows Israeli Jews to reclaim property lost during the war itself. The Israeli occupation used these racist laws to justify the evictions of Palestinian families.

What is actually happening in the Sheikh Jarrah neighborhood is the forcible transfer of citizens. These deportation procedures are a flagrant violation of the basic principles of both international humanitarian law and international human rights law. The occupying power has no right to confiscate the private property of the protected population. Moreover, the forcible transfer of population is a grave breach of the Fourth Geneva Convention and a violation of the right to adequate housing.

The UN Security Council has repeatedly condemned both annexation and settlement as null and void under international law, and has demanded that Israel reverse its illegal actions. UN human rights experts have also repeatedly called over the years to Israel to comply with its international obligations and stop the evictions, demolitions and forced displacement of Palestinians from their lands. But Israel is still evading the fulfillment of its international obligations without any international accountability. Failure to ensure accountability for Israel's crimes against the Palestinian people reinforces its impunity and makes the international community a partner in violations of international law.

The crime of apartheid is defined as inhumane acts committed in the context of systematic oppression and domination by one racial group over any other racial group or groups and committed with the intention of maintaining such systematic segregation. Based on the current situation in Israel and the occupied territories, it is clear that Israel is, in fact, engaged in apartheid against the Palestinian people.

The International Council Supporting Fair Trial and Human Rights demands that Israel remove the threat of eviction, respect the property rights of these Palestinian families, and repeal all discriminatory legislation from its laws. It calls on the international community to condemn Israel's illegal actions, stop supporting it immediately, open an investigation into all violations, and ensure the removal of all racist laws that deprive Palestinian citizens of their basic rights.

On the other hand, Israel allows Jewish settlers in East Jerusalem to continue its racist behavior against the Palestinian people, to achieve its declared goal of transforming Palestinian neighborhoods into Jewish neighborhoods to change the demographic environment in proportion to their interests at the expense of the rights of the Palestinian people. It also allowed thousands of Israeli police soldiers to storm the courtyards of Al-Aqsa Mosque and attack worshipers, resulting in the injury of more than 500 Palestinians in Al-Aqsa Mosque, Bab Al-Amoud, and Sheikh Jarrah, including very dangerous cases, paramedics, and journalists in the mosque and the vicinity of the Old City.

The intensification of violations against Palestinian citizens in East Jerusalem has led to the outbreak of violent confrontations between Israel and the Gaza Strip, causing casualties among civilians, the largest percentage of whom are children. Thousands of them were displaced in Gaza and the infrastructure was terribly destroyed, which led to solutions

without access to social and health services. Israel targeted more than a dozen media organizations in Gaza, injuring Palestinian journalists in Jerusalem. It also targeted medical staff and prevented them from reaching the injured to treat them.

The violent confrontations led to the commission of serious violations of international humanitarian law and international human rights law, war crimes, and crimes against humanity. Despite the numerous calls for an immediate ceasefire, the Security Council failed in several attempts to issue a joint statement that could save civilians after the intervention of the United States of America to continue that violence in taking more lives.

For more than half a century, the Israeli occupation has taken a heavy toll on the human rights situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. The patterns of violations of human rights and international humanitarian law that Israel has inflicted on peaceful Palestinians over the past decade have become all too familiar. The illegal settlement project and related illegal confiscation and destruction of property, the resulting demolitions and forced displacement, settler violence, excessive use of force, extrajudicial killings, administrative and arbitrary detentions, and collective punishment measures all remain at the core of these human rights violations. In the Occupied Palestinian Territory, it also remains without international accountability.

The International Council Supporting Fair Trial and Human Rights expresses its concern about the failure of the international community to put in place an effective mechanism to stop the war crimes committed by Israel against the Palestinian people. We remind states that they have a collective duty to ensure accountability, justice, and equality for Palestinians. As such, we encourage national governments to support boycott, divestment, and sanctions activities and respond positively to calls for such initiatives.

ICSFT demands that Israel fully comply with its obligations under international human rights and humanitarian law in the Occupied Palestinian Territories and calls on the international community and relevant United Nations bodies to conduct prompt, independent, impartial, and thorough investigations into all violations and abuses of international human rights and humanitarian law and war crimes.
