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

Written statement* submitted by Maat for Peace, Development and Human Rights Association, 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.

[30 May 2021]

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



The Escalation in Gaza Strip

The events in the Sheikh Jarrah neighborhood worsened after an Israeli court issued a decision in October 2020 to forcibly evacuate twelve Palestinian families living in the Sheikh Jarrah neighborhood in East Jerusalem, and to transfer the ownership of their homes to Israeli settler.

Approximately 500 Palestinians are threatened with deportation and are at risk of being denied their right to property and housing. The aforementioned Israeli court ruled that each family that was sentenced to eviction must pay \$ 20,000 to cover the legal fees that the settlers have cost during the trial. In addition, a decision was issued by the Israeli Jerusalem District Court directing four Palestinian families to vacate their homes, otherwise they will be forcibly evicted by the Israeli authorities on May 2, 2021.

Accordingly, tensions escalated, leading to the injury of hundreds of Palestinians with more than 20 deaths, including children, due to violence in Al-Aqsa Mosque and the Gaza Strip.

The occupation forces' aircraft, artillery, and warships launched more than 1,450 raids and attacks since the beginning of the aggression, affecting various areas of the Gaza Strip, focusing on the bombing of homes, residential buildings, government headquarters, and infrastructure.

The raids on the eighth day alone amounted to more than 241 raids carried out by aircraft, artillery and the occupation's battleships, and the bombing was concentrated in the west of Gaza City, and the north and south of the Strip.

This aggression resulted in the elevation of more than 200¹ martyrs, including: 63 children, 35 women, leaving thousands of injuries, most of them women and children.

As well, bombing 1005 home, at least 6,474 housing units were damaged due to moderate and partial damages as a result of the continuous shelling, the bombing of residential towers and homes and their total demolition of 132, and the total demolition of 33 media headquarters, 68 governmental agencies, 36 schools and a number of health facilities and primary care clinics, animal farms, agricultural lands, wells and irrigation networks, the bombing of streets and infrastructures represented in water and sewage networks, power lines, communications networks and the Internet and 8 Mosques and Churches.

In addition to that, the occupation continues to close the commercial crossings to the Gaza Strip to prevent fishermen from descending into the sea. Hence more, the aggression resulted in significant material losses amounting to 210.360 million dollars in its preliminary estimates, of which: 151.560 million dollars are direct losses, while indirect losses were estimated at 58.800 million dollars.

On the other hand, the occupation forces continue to target civilians in violation of international law, especially Articles 48 and 51 of Additional Protocol I and Article 13 of the Second Additional Protocol to the four Geneva Conventions. Also, targeting individuals' properties, as well as religious, cultural and educational properties as well.

In addition, civilians are arbitrarily detained and arrested in the El - Sheikh Jarrah neighborhood and arrested by the occupation authorities, as 1,500 people were arrested and stopped unlawfully on Tuesday, May 25, 2021,² as well as the illegal inspection campaign in Palestinian neighborhoods and the killing of civilians, whether in Gaza, Sheikh Jarrah, or other governorates and camps such as Hebron.

The Israeli occupation forces are also practicing forcible displacement of indigenous people, expelling them from their homes and replacing settlers in their place, in violation of international laws, especially the Fourth Geneva Convention.

¹ <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=27108&LangID=E>.

² The permanent mission of Palestine in Geneva during the organizational meeting for 30th special session.

Also, children of Gaza need special attention of the International Human Rights Mechanism. Lives have been lost and families shattered, with devastating impacts on children as quoted by the UN Chief “Gaza Children Living in hell on earth”.³

Furthermore, Maat expresses its grave concern over the international silence on human rights violations in Palestine, especially the silence of European countries, whether members or observers of the Human Rights Council. Also, the silence of the Western media and the failure to cover this aggression in an optimal way, as happens in any similar case in Europe or America.

Therefore, Maat recommends the following;

1. The necessity of holding regular investigative by the independent international experts to hold perpetrators accountable of the blatant human rights violations in to the occupied Palestinian territories.
 2. Urgent necessity of promoting the accountability and bring all the perpetrators of the crimes to the International Criminal Court.
 3. The necessity for presence of UN bodies offices in Palestine to monitor violations and take quick steps to charger perpetrators.
 4. The necessity for a permanent investigation committee from the International Criminal Court in the occupied Palestinian territories to monitor the violations and present the perpetrators to the court.
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³ See <https://www.un.org/press/en/2021/ga12325.doc.htm>.