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

**Joint written statement* submitted by the Women's
International Democratic Federation, a non-governmental
organization in general consultative status, the Federation of
Cuban Women, 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.

[10 February 2012]

* This written statement is issued, unedited, in the language(s) received from the submitting non-governmental organization(s).

The Women's International Democratic Federation (WIDF), an NGO that represents thousands of millions of women around the world and the Federation of Cuban Women (FMC) on behalf of more than 4 million members of the organization; both using their corresponding ECOSOC consultative status; raise their voices to the Human Rights Council (CODEHU) to denounce the situation of human rights deprivation in which the Palestinian women, historical victims as part of a whole people of the violence, cruelty and disrespect of the Israeli government; unfortunately remain despite of the efforts of the international community.

Usually, the Council, as the Commission did before, adopts resolutions related to this issue. For example, as we read in the Report of the Human Rights Council for last year, on March 25th, 2011, this mechanism adopted resolution 16/29 "Human rights in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem"; the 16/30 "Right of the Palestinian people to self-determination" and the 16/31 "Israeli settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and in the occupied Syrian Golan". Resolution 16/32, adopted on the same date, also informs us about the "Follow-up to the report of the United Nations Fact-Finding Mission on the Gaza Conflict."

The Women's International Democratic Federation and the Federation of Cuban Women, support these resolutions, guided by the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter.

We can read in these resolutions that the Council:

- *Reaffirms* the inalienable, permanent and unqualified right of the Palestinian people to self-determination, including their right to live in freedom, justice and dignity and to establish their sovereign, independent, democratic and viable contiguous State; 16/30/1.
- *Strongly condemns* the continuous Israeli military attacks and operations in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including its regular military incursions, and calls for their immediate cessation; 16/29/2.
- *Condemns* the recent Israeli announcements of the construction of new housing units for Israeli settlers in and around occupied East Jerusalem, as they undermine the peace process, constitute a threat to the two-State solution and the creation of a contiguous, sovereign and independent Palestinian State, and are in violation of international law, and calls upon the Government of Israel to immediately reverse its decisions, which would further undermine and jeopardize the ongoing efforts by the international community to reach a final settlement compliant with relevant United Nations resolutions; 16/31/3.
- *Demands* that the occupying Power, Israel, end its occupation of the Palestinian land occupied since 1967 and that it respect its commitments within the peace process towards the establishment of the independent sovereign Palestinian State, with East Jerusalem as its capital, living in peace and security with all its neighbours; 16/29/1.
- *Demands* that the occupying Power, Israel, immediately lift the siege imposed on the occupied Gaza Strip and that it open all borders and crossing points and allow the free access of fuel, humanitarian needs and medicine in addition to all necessary materials and equipment for the reconstruction and rehabilitation of Gaza, as agreed upon at the International Conference in Support of the Palestinian Economy for the Reconstruction of Gaza, held in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, on 2 March 2009; 16/29/14.
- *Demands* that Israel, the occupying Power, comply fully with its legal obligations, as mentioned in the advisory opinion rendered on 9 July 2004 by the International Court of Justice; 16/31/9.

It is noteworthy that at the end of these resolutions is expressed that the Council “Decides to continue the consideration of this question at its nineteenth Session”. It would be worth asking why, if then we do not act? What else is there to examine, if the evidence is obvious?

That is how we see the years passing by. This issue will be addressed in this Council meeting, and another report of the Special Rapporteur on the human rights situation in the Palestinian territories occupied since 1967 will be presented in the next one.

We know about the close links of the Human Rights Council with the Treaty Bodies. It is appropriate then to revise the Concluding Observations of CEDAW that in more than one occasion, when considering the reports presented by Israel, has approved specific recommendations to stop the violation of human rights perpetrated against Palestinian women in the occupied territories.

The FMC and the WIDF consider all have been said, written and approved by UN about the Palestinian people's inalienable right to enjoy peace, sovereignty and self determination. It only remains to implement what has been approved, that the UN demand that the resolutions agreed on this issue, apply with equal force that others that have been implemented.

The same occurs with the resolution "Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial blockade imposed by the United States against Cuba", supported 20 times by the majority of UN member states within the framework of the General Assembly. Despite of what have been approved on this regard, the Cuban people have faced and endured 50 years of blockade. However, the unity of the vast majority of the Cuban people around the Revolution, its purpose to defend the goals achieved, an unshakable faith in victory and the international solidarity and support have enabled the country to advance in spite of such injustice.

How long we will continue addressing these issues at the UN? How much more is needed to write about? Will the current Reform process really respond to the legitimate interests of the people, without double standards?

Social movements, in turn, increase their support to the just cause of the Palestinian people each day, however the conflict remains a reality.

As stated by Cuba's National Hero José Martí: "Doing is the best way of saying". We demand the fulfilment of what have been agreed and the ending of the disrespect and the injustice Israel daily commits against this long-suffering people.

United Nations can count on the support of the Women's International Democratic Federation and the Federation of Cuban Women in order to achieve Palestinian independence and its recognition as a sovereign state with full rights and self determination.
