



Statement

By

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at the  
Fourth Committee

Item 52: Report of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices  
Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other  
Arabs of the Occupied Territories

New York Monday, November 11, 2013

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Mr. Chairman,

Lebanon would like to thank the chairman of the "Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories", and would also like to express our thanks to the Special Committee and the Secretariat for the reports on this issue.

Mr. Chairman,

Amira Haas, a journalist in Haaretz, captured the essence of the Israeli practices when she wrote: "Israelis will continue to be periodically reminded that (our) their ongoing dictatorship over the Palestinians is not normal and not viable."

Indeed, it is not normal that today 7 million out of 12 million Palestinians are refugees, inside Palestine and in host countries including mine. Meanwhile Israel continues to defy the collective international will translated into UN resolutions, in particular resolution 194, and denies their right to return to their homeland.

It is not normal that while the talks have resumed, Israeli authorities continue to approve building settlements. It was only on November 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2013, when they approved the construction of 1700 units in Jerusalem and the West Bank. This latest decision will add to the thousands upon thousands of illegal settlements approved and built. Furthermore, this policy is not only a blatant violation of International Law and United Nations resolutions, but is rendering any contiguous territory impossible for the State of Palestine.

Moreover, 441 miles of apartheid wall were constructed, more than 7000 Palestinians were killed by Israeli forces, thousands of new homes have been built for settlers, and 25,000 Palestinian houses have been demolished in the West Bank.

It is also not normal that Israeli settlers, emboldened with a sense of impunity, continue their illegal activities against civilians, terrorizing children while attacking their schools, robbing Palestinians from the source of their livelihood, stealing the dignity in them.

Mr. Chairman,

There is an international consensus that children are the future, and as much as you invest in them, you invest in a better future. It is unfortunate that Palestinians children are routinely arrested in the middle of the night by Israeli soldiers, handcuffed and blindfolded, taken to unknown destinations. They are abused and locked in solitary confinement for days and weeks. They are subjected to physical and verbal violence, humiliation and are restricted access to toilets, food and water.

As of June 2013, 193 children, including 41 below the age of 16, were being held in prisons and detention centers inside Israel, in blatant violation of article 46 of the Fourth Geneva Convention.

According to the report of the UN Committee for the Rights of the Child, Israeli soldiers have used Palestinian children as human shields to enter potentially dangerous buildings ahead of them and to stand in front of military vehicles to deter stone-throwing. It seems that this is the 'future' Israel has in store for the Palestinian children.

Mr. Chairman,

This General Assembly has time and again opposed Israel's discriminative policy of restricting the Palestinian population from access to water resources in their own land, while making an abundant amount of water from those same resources readily available to its own citizens, including settlers in the Occupied West Bank and East Jerusalem.

Indeed access to natural resources is a crucial part of the right to development, in particular when all efforts are focused on preparing the post 2015 development agenda. The people of the state of Palestine have the right to have access to water, to their land, and even to their olive trees, and it is the obligation under international law that Israel ensures that access.

Turning to Gaza, this is the 7<sup>th</sup> year of the illegal blockade imposed by Israel, when Israel decided to turn it into the largest prison in the world. Even for those who might say that Israel is not physically present in Gaza: could they deny that Israel is controlling every aspect of Palestinian life: from access and entry point, to restrictions on basic services for survival, to resources crucial for livelihood? The numbers speak for themselves, with 70% of the population dependent on international aid for survival and 90% of the water unfit for human consumption. It is high time to end this illegal blockade.

Mr. Chairman,

At a time when the international community is marshalling its efforts to ensure that the resumption of the negotiations between Palestinians and Israelis will achieve progress within the set timeframe of nine months, statements and actions from Israeli authorities are undermining efforts for peace. In light of all this, my delegation recognizes the value of the statement issued by the Secretary General on October 30, 2013, in which he "deplores the announcements (today) of further Israeli settlement plans in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem. Settlement activity is contrary to international law and constitutes an obstacle to peace. Any measures that prejudice final status issues will not be recognized by the international community."

Thank you Mr. Chairman.