

United Nations Human Rights Council – 43rd Regular Session

Item 9 – Racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related forms of intolerance, follow-up and implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action

Joint oral intervention

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Al Mezan Centre for Human Rights  
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Madam President,

Last month, in the midst of the coronavirus pandemic, Israel swore in a new government seemingly committed to formally annexing parts of the occupied Palestinian territory (OPT) in the West Bank in July, in a blatant violation of international law. This annexation, part of the so-called Trump-Netanyahu “Deal of the Century” and the Netanyahu-Gantz coalition agreement, normalizes Israel’s colonial project and amounts to apartheid via the continued expansion and construction of illegal settlements, displacement and dispossession of Palestinians, and demographic manipulation.

The principles of this plan are enshrined in Israel’s Jewish Nation-State Basic Law enacted in July 2018. This law established a constitutional order based on systematic ethnic supremacy, domination, and segregation in the so-called “Land of Israel” and the denial of the realization of national self-determination for the Palestinian people. Article 7 of this law provides that Jewish settlement is a national value to be encouraged and strengthened, giving the state authorities further constitutional legal tools to justify the illegal settlement enterprise in the occupied Palestinian and Syrian territories. This law intends to justify as constitutional segregation in land and housing that targets all Palestinians in historic Palestine, including Palestinian citizens of Israel, who have suffered decades of systematic oppression.

Annexation would further entrench racial, ethnic, and religious segregation as a legal norm. In this context, Israel will formally establish itself as the sole sovereign regime over the Palestinian people in historic Palestine.

We call on the UN and the international community to call for the dismantling of all settlements, to vehemently oppose any annexation, and to guarantee the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination, including the right of return to their homes and property.

Thank you.