

**Al-Haq (Joint Statement)**  
Speaker: Ms Rania Muhareb (Al-Haq)

**Joint Oral Intervention to the United Nations Human Rights Council**

Al-Haq – Law in the Service of Man  
Al Mezan Centre for Human Rights  
The Palestinian Center for Human Rights  
Adalah – The Legal Center for Arab Minority Rights in Israel  
BADIL Resource Center for Palestinian Residency and Refugee Rights  
Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies

**28<sup>th</sup> Special Session of the United Nations Human Rights Council on the deteriorating human rights situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem**

18 May 2018

*General Debate*

Mr President,

Over the past eight weeks, the Israeli occupying forces have killed 115 Palestinians, including 15 children. At least 86 Palestinians were killed during peaceful Great Return March demonstrations that called for the realization of Palestinian refugees' right of return and an end to Israel's 11-year closure of the Gaza Strip, amounting to unlawful collective punishment.

Since March 30<sup>th</sup>, the Israeli occupying forces have injured over 3,600 Palestinians through the use of live fire, wilfully causing serious injury to unarmed demonstrators, while they repeatedly committed wilful killings of protected persons, which may amount to grave breaches and war crimes.

Shoot-to-kill orders were issued at the highest levels of the Israeli military, reflecting Israel's longstanding disregard for Palestinian life, no less in the seventieth year since the Nakba. On March 31<sup>st</sup>, the day after 15 Palestinians were killed in Gaza, the Israeli army stated that "everything was accurate and measured, and we know where every bullet landed."

Mr President,

As we mark seventy years of forcible displacement and exile of millions of Palestinians, Israel's brutal suppression of the Great Return March sends a clear message to the world, that Israel is accountable to no one. It is time to act against this longstanding impunity.

Our organisations call for an independent, transparent, and effective investigation and accountability for violations and suspected crimes committed during the Great Return March, within the scope of the rights of the demonstrators, including to life, to freedom of assembly and expression, and to return, which Israel has sought to suppress for eight weeks in Gaza, and ever since the Nakba.

Thank you.

*The video of this joint oral intervention may be watched [here](#) at UN Web TV.*