

United Nations Human Rights Council – 43<sup>rd</sup> Session  
Joint Oral Intervention – Item 7: General Debate

Date: 16 June 2020

Delivered by: Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies

Madam President,

Let me begin by commending the High Commissioner and her office for the initial release of the report on the database of businesses involved in Israel's illegal settlement enterprise, despite undue political pressure on her office to suppress this important tool.

The database represents a historic touchstone and important precedent in broader efforts to ensure corporate accountability, including in the areas of environmental rights and violations of international humanitarian law. In line with HRC resolution 31/36, we urge the OHCHR to ensure that the database is updated annually and made publicly accessible until illegal settlements are dismantled, Israel's prolonged military occupation comes to an end, and the Palestinian people are able to fully exercise their right to self-determination, including sovereignty over their natural resources.

Your Excellency,

As states present today are struggling with the current pandemic sweeping the globe, the government of Israel continues to exploit an occupied population and its resources, in part to blunt the impact of the virus to their economy.

Such a blatant case of illegal colonial exploitation being treated as “business as usual” deeply undermines international order based on the rule of law. The progress made over the years in the development of international humanitarian law and the eradication of colonialism, will continue to be threatened so long as Israel is able to continue to exploit occupied territory and its civilian population as a “business venture.”

As such, support by UN member states in the development and updating of the database, including by ensuring the allocation of sufficient resources to carry out this work, will play an important role in challenging Israeli practices in the occupied Palestinian territory and in preserving the integrity of the rule of law over corporate profit.

Thank you.

Signatories:

1. 11.11.11
2. Addameer Prisoner Support and Human Rights Association
3. Alataa Charitable Society
4. Al-Haq
5. Al Dameer Association for Human Rights
6. Al Mezan Centre for Human Rights
7. Arab Network for tolerance
8. Association des Universitaires Pour le Respect du Droit International en Palestine (AURDIP)

9. Association France Palestine Solidarité
10. Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies
11. Center for Arab Unity Studies
12. Center for Defense of Liberties and Civil Rights (Hurriyat)
13. Centro de Estudios Legales y Sociales (CELS)
14. Collectif Judéo Arabe et Citoyen pour la Palestine
15. Community Action Center, Al-Quds University
16. Conectas Direitos Humanos
17. CNCD - 11.11.11
18. DefendDefenders
19. Defence for Children International - Palestine
20. Fares Al Arab for Development and Charity Works
21. Forsan Al-Ghad Youth Association
22. Housing and Land Rights Network – Habitat International Coalition
23. Human Rights & Democracy Media Center (SHAMS)
24. International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH)
25. International Service for Human Rights
26. Just Peace Advocates
27. MA'AN Development Center
28. MRAP (Mouvement contre le Racisme et pour l'Amitié entre les Peuples)
29. Nuseirat Rehabilitation and Social Training Association (NRSTA)
30. Palestinian Agricultural Development Association
31. Palestinian Centre for Human Rights (PCHR)
32. Palestinian NGO Network
33. Ramallah Center for Human Rights Studies (RCHRS)
34. Stars of Hope
35. The Civic Coalition for Palestinians right in Jerusalem
36. The Palestine Institute for Public Policy
37. The National Society for Rehabilitation
38. Union Juive Française pour la Paix (UJFP)
39. Union of Health Care Committees
40. Youth Political Forum
41. Zakher Association