

United Nations Human Rights Council – 43rd Regular Session

Urgent Debate on Racism

Joint Oral Intervention

Delivered by: Al-Haq, Law in the Service of Man
Speaker: Ms Nada Awad, Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies

*NGOs in special consultative status with the
United Nations Economic and Social Council joining this statement:*

Adalah – Legal Center for Arab Minority Rights in Israel
Al Mezan Centre for Human Rights
Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies
Habitat International Coalition

Date: 18 June 2020

Madam President,

Palestinians stand in solidarity with the Black Lives Matter movement in calling for an end to systemic racism and the ongoing erasure of Black people, Native Americans, and indigenous peoples worldwide. We stand together in the struggle against colonial dispossession and the deep-rooted legacy of slavery and recognise the long history of Black-Palestinian solidarity.

Just five days after George Floyd was brutally murdered by US police, Israeli border police killed Palestinian person with disability Iyad Al-Hallaq in occupied East Jerusalem, in what amounts to a war crime giving rise to individual criminal responsibility at the ICC.ⁱ

Iyad's killing is not isolated. Over the years, Israel has resorted to a systematic shoot-to-kill policy targeting Palestinians on both sides of the Green Line. In 2019, the UN Commission of Inquiry found that, during the demonstrations in Gaza, Israeli snipers knowingly shot at journalists, health workers, children, and persons with disabilities.ⁱⁱ

Madam President,

Israel has unlawfully established itself as the sole sovereign over all Palestinians in historic Palestine, imposing systematic racial supremacy and domination over the Palestinian people, while justifying the exploitation of their natural resources on the basis of entitlement, in what amounts to apartheid.

Recognizing the inter-connectedness of anti-colonial struggles around the world, we endorse calls for the creation of a commission of inquiry into systemic racism, police brutality, and excessive use of force against Black people and other people of colour in the US and worldwide, with a view to bringing perpetrators to justice.

Thank you.

ⁱ Al-Haq, "Al-Haq Sends Urgent Appeal to UN Special Procedures on the Extrajudicial Execution and Wilful Killing of Palestinian Person with Disability Iyad Al-Hallaq," 9 June 2020, available at: <http://www.alhaq.org/advocacy/16963.html>.

ⁱⁱ OHCHR, "No Justification for Israel to Shoot Protesters with Live Ammunition," 28 February 2019, available at: <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/HRC/Pages/NewsDetail.aspx?NewsID=24226&LangID=E>.