



United Nations Human Rights Council – 44th Session
Joint¹ Oral Intervention: Interactive Dialogue with SR on the situation of Human Rights in the
Palestinian Territory occupied since 1967
Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies (CIHRS)
16 July 2020

Madam President,

These are the voices of Palestinian victims of Israel's collective punishment.

Sarah Dwayat, following the punitive sealing of her home, said: “Since they took my son Abed, our lives crumbled. They punitively sealed our home and displaced us.” Similarly, Tahani Qunbar said: “The occupation punitively sealed our home with concrete, withheld my husband's body, and fined my four children and me 2.3 million dollars as compensation.” Nadia abu Jamal, following her forcible transfer from Jerusalem, said: “Imagine the Israeli army breaking into your home and demolishing the house you spent a lifetime building...” Rula Abu Sbeih concluded: “In spite of the occupation's policies that aim to break my family, such as the punitive demolition of my home and the arrest of my children, we are more than ever convinced that we have to fight these injustices.”

Like hundred others, these women and their families have lived through Israel's nightmare of inhumane policies aimed at subjugating and oppressing the Palestinian people. Victims of Israel's collective punishment welcomed the report as the first step towards recognition of their pain and suffering, a recognition of these violations to their most fundamental human rights, including their dignity.

¹ Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies (CIHRS), Al-Haq - Law in the Service of Man, Al Mezan Center for Human Rights, Adalah, Women's Center for Legal Aid and Counselling (WCLAC), and NGOs without consultative status: Addameer Prisoner Support and Human Rights Association, Community Action Center – Al-Quds University, Jerusalem Legal Aid and Human Rights Center (JLAC), Civic Coalition for Palestinian Rights in Jerusalem (CCPRJ).

In his report, Special Rapporteur Michael Lynk affirmed "Like torture, there are no permissible exceptions to the use of collective punishment in law. And, like torture, the use of collective punishment flouts law and morality, dignity and justice, and stains all those who practice it." He called on Israel to end all measures amounting to collective punishment, including an end to: the closure of Gaza, all restrictions on freedom of movement across the Occupied Palestinian Territory, the punitive demolitions of homes, the punitive residency revocations, the cutting of benefits, the punitive closures of towns and all delays in returning bodies for burial.

Former UN Secretary Generals, High Commissioner Bachelet, the ICRC, and UN treaty bodies have all called on Israel to put an end to its illegal collective punishment targeting the Palestinian people. In the UPR review of Israel in 2018, several UN member states called on Israel to put an end to collective punishment, including Germany, Namibia and Malaysia. Despite the international community's condemnation of Israel's use of illegal collective punishment, the Occupying Power continues to enjoy impunity.

Victims of collective punishment continue to endure these oppressive policies. They call on you to act to end all forms of Israeli collective punishment against Palestinians.

Thank you.