

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

Date: 19 March 2021

Speaker: Ms. Ilham Shaheen

My name is Ilham Shaheen. I speak to you today as a Palestinian from Jerusalem's African-Palestinian community. As an integral part of the Palestinian people, our community continues to face Israel's laws, policies and practices of racial domination and oppression.

In the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, Palestinian hospitals are overcrowded with patients, and the occupied territory is facing the devastating effects of the pandemic. As a Palestinian in Jerusalem, I have access to the vaccine while Israel denies lifesaving vaccine to millions of Palestinian in the occupied West Bank and Gaza. This is a stark example of Israel's fragmentation of the Palestinian people and apartheid policies.

Our organizations reiterate the interconnectedness of anti-colonial struggles and the fight against systemic racism around the world and recognize the importance of the Durban declaration in addressing these issues. While the Durban declaration recognizes the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination, Israel has imposed a regime of racial domination and oppression, amounting to apartheid, and continues to obstruct the Palestinian people's realization of their collective rights, including through the strategic fragmentation of Palestinians into at least four categories who cannot meet, live together, or exercise their right to self-determination.

As we celebrate the 20th anniversary of the Durban Declaration, we call on UN member states to address systemic racism and support accountability processes to put an end to impunity surrounding racial oppression globally. The Council and UN member states should address systemic racism, police brutality, and excessive use of force against Black people and other people of color in the US and worldwide and ensure that perpetrators are held accountable. To put an end to the apartheid regime Israel imposes over the Palestine people, we call on the HRC to recognize this reality and take effective measures to put an end to this crime against humanity.

Joining organisations:

1. Al Mezan Center for Human Rights
2. Al-Haq, Law in the Service of Man
3. Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies
4. Community Action Center - Al Quds University

5. MIFTAH

6. Palestinian Centre for Human Rights