



Item 9 – Interactive Dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on Racism
38th Regular Session of the United Nations Human Rights Council

Joint Oral Intervention

Al-Haq – Law in the Service of Man
and BADIL Resource Center for Palestinian Residency and Refugee Rights

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Thank you, Mr. President.

Al-Haq and BADIL welcome the report of the special rapporteur on racism, which reviews institutionalised laws, policies, and practices with a racially discriminatory effect on groups, notably in their access to citizenship status. We deplore that the rapporteur's request for a country visit to Israel remains unanswered and her access to the occupied Palestinian territory denied.

Mr. President,

Racism against Palestinians has been institutionalised in Israel since 1948, entrenched in the Law of Return, which grants citizenship to any Jewish person worldwide while no comparable law guarantees the right of Palestinians to receive citizenship or Palestinian refugees to return.

Seventy years since the Nakba, Palestinian citizens of Israel continue to live a 'second-class' life in their own land. This June, the Israeli Parliament rejected the possibility even of legislating on the proposed Basic Law: State of all its Citizens, calling for equality in the enjoyment of citizenship status. Meanwhile, millions of Palestinian refugees continue to live stateless, denied the right of return to their homes and property, as mandated by international law.

In occupied East Jerusalem, Israel retains the discretion to revoke Palestinians' residency status, despite them already being stateless, if they cannot continuously prove their 'centre of life' in the city, and, as of March, their allegiance to the occupying power.

In the rest of the West Bank, Israel has established a regime of institutionalised racism and discrimination against Palestinians, with different sets of laws and separate roads and services for Israeli settlers, and unequal access to natural resources and land, which may amount to the crime of apartheid, giving rise to individual criminal responsibility at the International Criminal Court.

Mr. President,

Our organisations call on the special rapporteur on racism to reflect the plight of Palestinians in her upcoming reports and to renew her request for a country visit. We further call on the Human Rights Council to take decisive action to bring Israel's impunity to an end. Seventy years is enough.

Thank you.