

Oral Statement (Item 7, General Debate)

27th Human Rights Council Session

Al-Haq, Law in the Service of Man

Mr. President, Distinguished Members of the Council,

On 26 August, the Palestinian and Israeli Authorities signed a cease-fire agreement to end the recent assault on the Gaza Strip, promising basic rights to the civilian population. A few days later, the Israeli army opened fire on Palestinian fishermen located within agreed parameters off the Gaza Coast. Such an incident exemplifies Israel's continued use of excessive force, in violation of international law.

Similarly in the West Bank, Israeli forces shot and *killed* two Palestinian civilians following the cease-fire agreement. 16-year-old Muhammad Sinokrot was shot with a rubber bullet in the head, leading to his death after a week in hospital. Three days later, 22-year-old Issa al-Qatri was shot with a live bullet in the chest, killing him within minutes.

Furthermore, Israel has continued its practice of arbitrary arrest with the mass detention of at least 216 Palestinians in the last three weeks, including an 8-year-old. In addition, over 500 Palestinian detainees are being held unlawfully in administrative detention.

Israel has also continued to exploit land and natural resources in occupied Palestine - impacting directly on the Palestinian right to self-determination and freedom of movement. This is illustrated by Israel's recent unlawful annexation of more than 1,000 acres of land in the West Bank.

Israel's continuing violations of international law hamper political efforts for peace. Accordingly, we encourage UN-Member States to address such violations under agenda item 7, an indispensable platform necessary to seek Israel's adherence to international law and to address the unique nature of Israel's occupation.

We also ask Member States to encourage the Palestinian Authority to join the International Criminal Court so as to ensure that efforts for peace are not detached from justice. Similarly, we ask that Member States support the upcoming Commission of Inquiry in the Occupied Territory by ensuring Israel's full cooperation.

Thank you.