

Al-Haq Oral Statement

Human Rights Council, 31st Session, Item 7 / Interactive Dialogue

Mr. President, Distinguished Members of the Council,

We¹ would like to extend our sincere gratitude to Special Rapporteur Wibisono for his work over the last two years. In January this year, Dr. Wibisono submitted his resignation as Special Rapporteur to the Occupied Palestinian Territory. He took up this mandate with an understanding that Israel would grant him access as an impartial and objective observer -but no such access was granted.

A country that refuses to grant access to an impartial and objective observer, Mr. President, clearly has something to hide. One has to wonder why the Israeli government, yet again, is being dismissive of an independent process that aims to investigate its occupation.

The Israeli government not only refused to cooperate with Special Rapporteur Wibisono, it has refused to cooperate with numerous Human Rights Council mechanisms. There was no cooperation with the latest Commission of Inquiry; no cooperation with the fact-finding mission on settlements, and the list goes on.

Israel continuously tries to evade accountability. And today, we are all witness to this attempt as it lobbies for a delay in the appointment of a Special Rapporteur.

At the same time, civil society space is shrinking. Attacks on both Palestinian and Israeli civil society organisations are taking place to silence us in seeking accountability for unlawful Israeli policies and practices.

Campaigns of defamation and incitement, by both the Israeli government and questionable groups, have escalated this month from calls with death threats to threatening messages delivered to the home of an Al-Haq staff member.

In order to ensure accountability - we ask you Mr. President to appoint a new Special Rapporteur this week. We reject strongly any delay in the appointment process. Further, we ask the Council to take firm action in response to Israeli non-cooperation with the UN and incitement campaigns against civil society.

Thank you.

¹ This Oral Intervention is joined by Badil and Al-Mezan - both with ECOSOC status. Diakonia and Addameer also endorse this Oral Intervention.