



Statement

by

Lebanon

**at the
Fourth Committee**

**“Report of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting
the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs
of the Occupied Territories”**

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*Permanent Mission of Lebanon to the United Nations
866 United Nations Plaza, Suite 531, New York, NY. 10017*

Mr. Chairman,

Lebanon would like to thank the Chairman of the “Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories,” and we would like to express our thanks to the Special Committee and the Secretariat for the reports on this issue.

Mr. Chairman,

From 1967 to 2010 Israel established an estimated 150 settlements in the West Bank and 12 in Jerusalem, controlling over 42 percent of the West Bank.

In the words of the Special Rapporteur on Human Rights Mr. Richard Falk: “This is a serious escalation of the settlement agenda that is inconsistent with Israeli political rhetoric supporting negotiations to establish a viable, independent, contiguous and sovereign Palestinian State.”

Indeed, Israel continues to disregard UN Security Council and General Assembly resolutions, to violate Article 49 of the Fourth Geneva Convention as well as Articles 43 and 46 of the Hague Regulations, and to challenge the authority of the world’s highest judicial body, the International Court of Justice. It was only Tuesday of this week, when the Government of Israel announced its plans for the construction of over 1200 units in the West Bank and 800 in East Jerusalem.

The International Community continues to reiterate its call for the immediate and complete freeze of illegal settlement activity, yet Israel continues to act in defiance of the will of the international community.

As if the expansion of settlements is not enough, Israeli settlers are escalating their violence against the Palestinian civilian population. 535 attacks have been perpetrated since the beginning of this year, not only against the Palestinian people, but upon their churches, mosques, monasteries, schools, homes, fields, and crops. Even young schoolchildren are threatened and assaulted by Israeli settlers on their way to school, as the UN reports describe such incidents as “violent rampages” to which the Israeli forces fail to investigate or apprehend the settlers responsible.

Mr. Chairman,

What is now called “administrative detention” in Israel was formerly known as internment. Internment was a colonial procedure used to remove individuals from society when no criminal charges were made. The reports before us today confirm that the practice of administrative detention in Israel has caused the prolonged confinement of persons not engaged in violent activities and who do not pose a security threat to suffer exceedingly harsh treatment of cruel and unusual punishment, in particular Palestinian women and children. According to the report of the Secretary-General: “at the end of May 2012, 234 Palestinian boys between the ages of 12 and 17 were in Israeli detention for alleged security violations, marking a 73 % increase since December 2011.” It is high time for these children to regain their freedom and be able to dream of a better future.

560 Palestinian structures were demolished over the past 12 months. How many more homes, infrastructure projects, roads and agricultural lands and facilities have to be destroyed in Israel's escalating campaign of demolitions, for the international community to act?

1094 Palestinians were displaced in 2011 alone, nearly double the amount over the course of just one year. How many more Palestinian families must be forcibly displaced from their homes for the international community to put an end to these abuses of human rights?

Mr. Chairman,

The people of Gaza are being subjected to collective punishment in violation of Articles 33 and 55 of the Fourth Geneva Convention, yet Israel continues to tighten the siege. The Separation Wall and its permit regime are enforcing an apartheid policy in violation of the Advisory Opinion of the International Court of Justice, yet Israel continues to construct the Barrier.

In the Gaza Strip as well as in the West Bank and East Jerusalem, Israeli authorities are imposing severe restrictions on movement and access in all aspects of life: food, basic services, housing, education, employment, natural resources, livelihoods, religious sites, hospitals and healthcare.

Mr. Chairman,

Water is a basic and vital source of life, yet under alleged "Israeli water management":

- Israel extracts water from Palestinian land for use in Israel and by Israeli settlers;
- Israel demolishes water tanks, pumps and wells, as in one case an Israeli army convoy destroyed nine large water tanks in one village in one day;
- Israel pumps water into the Gaza Strip in which 95% of it is unfit for human consumption, as a warning issued by the UN Environment Program, (UNEP), has stated.

This is how Israel is managing the land, this is how Israel is managing the people under occupation, and this is how Israel is managing natural resources.

Mr. Chairman,

The people of Palestine are a people whose rights are violated on a daily basis, and whose land is being degraded over time.

Allow me to quote former US Attorney General Mr. Ramsey Clark:

"We've had 50 years of assault on Palestinian rights, I think they're the most terrorized people on Earth and have been for so many years. Practically every Palestinian lives in constant harassment, threat of violence, and humiliation; it's been that way for a long, long time."

It is high time Mr. Chairman, that we support the People of Palestine in their right to live in dignity, in the realization of justice, and in the quest for peace.