



# General Assembly

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## Human Rights Council

### Twenty-first special session

23 July 2014

#### Resolution adopted by the Human Rights Council

**S-21/1**

#### **Ensuring respect for international law in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem**

*The Human Rights Council,*

*Guided* by the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,

*Recalling* General Assembly resolution 60/251 of 15 March 2006 and Human Rights Council resolutions 5/1 and 5/2 of 18 June 2007,

*Reaffirming* the right to self-determination of the Palestinian people and the inadmissibility of the acquisition of land by the use of force, as enshrined in the Charter,

*Affirming* the applicability of international human rights law and international humanitarian law, in particular the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949,<sup>1</sup> to the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem,

*Reaffirming* that all High Contracting Parties to the Fourth Geneva Convention<sup>1</sup> are under the obligation to respect and ensure respect for the obligations arising from the said Convention in relation to the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and reaffirming their obligations under articles 146, 147 and 148 with regard to penal sanctions, grave breaches and the responsibilities of the High Contracting Parties,

*Gravely concerned* at the lack of implementation of the recommendations contained in the report of the United Nations Fact-Finding Mission on the Gaza Conflict of 2009,<sup>2</sup> and convinced that lack of accountability for violations of international law reinforces a culture of impunity, leading to a recurrence of violations and seriously endangering the maintenance of international peace,

*Noting* that 9 July 2014 marked the tenth anniversary of the adoption of the advisory opinion by the International Court of Justice on the legal consequences of the construction

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<sup>1</sup> United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 75, No. 973.

<sup>2</sup> A/HRC/12/48.



of a wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory and that no progress has been made on its implementation, and affirming the urgent need to respect and ensure respect for international humanitarian law and international human rights law in this regard,

*Firmly convinced* that justice and respect for the rule of law are the indispensable bases for peace, and stressing that prevailing long-standing and systemic impunity for international law violations has created a justice crisis in the Occupied Palestinian Territory that warrants action, including accountability for international crimes,

*Noting* the systematic failure by Israel to carry out genuine investigations in an impartial, independent, prompt and effective way, as required by international law, on violence and offences carried out against Palestinians by the occupying forces and settlers and to establish judicial accountability over its military actions in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem,

*Emphasizing* the obligations of Israel as the occupying Power to ensure the welfare and safety of the Palestinian civilian population under its occupation in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and in the Gaza Strip, and noting Israel's wilful abdication and rejection of its obligations in this regard,

*Noting* that the deliberate targeting of civilians and other protected persons and the perpetration of systematic, flagrant and widespread violations of applicable international humanitarian law and international human rights law in situations of armed conflict constitute grave breaches and a threat to international peace and security,

*Deploring* the massive Israeli military operations in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, since 13 June 2014, which have involved disproportionate and indiscriminate attacks and resulted in grave violations of the human rights of the Palestinian civilian population, including through the most recent Israeli military assault on the occupied Gaza Strip, the latest in a series of military aggressions by Israel, and actions of mass closure, mass arrest and the killing of civilians in the occupied West Bank,

*Expressing grave concern* at the critical humanitarian situation in the Gaza Strip, including in particular the forced displacement of tens of thousands of Palestinian civilians, the crisis in access to adequate water and sanitation services affecting nearly 1 million people, and the extensive damage to electricity infrastructure resulting in 80 per cent of the population receiving electricity only four hours a day, and underlining the importance of providing emergency humanitarian assistance to them and other victims,

*Welcoming* the establishment of the Palestinian national consensus Government on 2 July 2014 as an important step towards Palestinian reconciliation, which is crucial for achieving a two-State solution based on the pre-1967 borders and lasting peace, and emphasizing that the situation of the occupied Gaza Strip is unsustainable as long as it remains geographically, politically and economically separated from the West Bank,

1. *Strongly condemns* the failure of Israel, the occupying Power, to end its prolonged occupation of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, in accordance with international law and relevant United Nations resolutions;

2. *Condemns in the strongest terms* the widespread, systematic and gross violations of international human rights and fundamental freedoms arising from the Israeli military operations carried out in the Occupied Palestinian Territory since 13 June 2014, particularly the latest Israeli military assault on the occupied Gaza Strip, by air, land and sea, which has involved disproportionate and indiscriminate attacks, including aerial bombardment of civilian areas, the targeting of civilians and civilian properties in collective punishment contrary to international law, and other actions, including the targeting of medical and humanitarian personnel, that may amount to international crimes, directly resulting in the killing of more than 650 Palestinians, most of them civilians and more than

170 of whom are children, the injury of more than 4,000 people and the wanton destruction of homes, vital infrastructure and public properties;

3. *Condemns* all violence against civilians wherever it occurs, including the killing of two Israeli civilians as a result of rocket fire, and urges all parties concerned to respect their obligations under international humanitarian law and international human rights law;

4. *Calls for* an immediate cessation of Israeli military assaults throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and an end to attacks against all civilians, including Israeli civilians;

5. *Welcomes* the initiative of Egypt, supported by the League of Arab States, and calls for all regional and international actors to support this initiative in view of securing a comprehensive ceasefire;

6. *Demands* that Israel, the occupying Power, immediately and fully end its illegal closure of the occupied Gaza Strip, which in itself amounts to collective punishment of the Palestinian civilian population, including through the immediate, sustained and unconditional opening of the crossings for the flow of humanitarian aid, commercial goods and persons to and from the Gaza Strip, in compliance with its obligations under international humanitarian law;

7. *Calls upon* the international community, including the States Members of the United Nations, international financial institutions and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, as well as regional and interregional organizations, to provide urgently needed humanitarian assistance and services to the Palestinian people in the Gaza Strip, including by supporting the emergency appeal launched by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East on 17 July 2014;

8. *Expresses grave concern* at the rising number of incidents of violence, destruction, harassment, provocation and incitement by extremist Israeli settlers illegally transferred to the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, against Palestinian civilians, including children, and their properties, and condemns in the strongest terms the resulting perpetration of hate crimes;

9. *Expresses deep concern* at the condition of Palestinian prisoners and detainees in Israeli jails and detention centres, in particular following the arrest by Israel of more than 1,000 Palestinians since 13 June 2014, and calls upon Israel, the occupying Power, to immediately release all Palestinian prisoners whose detention is not in accordance with international law, including all children and all members of the Palestinian Legislative Council;

10. *Underlines* the importance of ensuring the protection of all civilians, emphasizes the continued failure of Israel to protect the Palestinian civilian population under its occupation as demanded by international law, and in this context calls for immediate international protection for the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter of the United Nations, international humanitarian law and international human rights law;

11. *Recommends* that the Government of Switzerland, in its capacity as depositary of the Fourth Geneva Convention,<sup>1</sup> promptly reconvene the conference of High Contracting Parties to the Convention on measures to enforce the Convention in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and to ensure its respect in accordance with article 1 common to the four Geneva Conventions,<sup>3</sup> bearing in mind the

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<sup>3</sup> United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 75, Nos. 970–973.

statement adopted by the Conference of the High Contracting Parties on 15 July 1999, and the Declaration adopted by the Conference on 5 December 2001;

12. *Requests* all relevant special procedures mandate holders to urgently seek and gather information on all human rights violations in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, according to their respective mandates, and to include their observations in their annual reports to the Human Rights Council;

13. *Decides* to urgently dispatch an independent, international commission of inquiry, to be appointed by the President of the Human Rights Council, to investigate all violations of international humanitarian law and international human rights law in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, particularly in the occupied Gaza Strip, in the context of the military operations conducted since 13 June 2014, whether before, during or after, to establish the facts and circumstances of such violations and of the crimes perpetrated and to identify those responsible, to make recommendations, in particular on accountability measures, all with a view to avoiding and ending impunity and ensuring that those responsible are held accountable, and on ways and means to protect civilians against any further assaults, and to report to the Council at its twenty-eighth session;

14. *Requests* the cooperation, as appropriate, of other relevant United Nations bodies with the commission of inquiry to carry out its mission, and requests the assistance of the Secretary-General and the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights in this regard, including in the provision of all administrative, technical and logistical assistance required to enable the commission of inquiry and special procedures mandate holders to fulfil their mandates promptly and efficiently;

15. *Requests* the High Commissioner to report on the implementation of the present resolution, including on measures taken with regard to ensuring accountability for the serious violations of international humanitarian law and human rights in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, to the Human Rights Council at its twenty-seventh session;

16. *Decides* to remain seized of the matter.

2nd meeting  
23 July 2014

[Adopted by a recorded vote of 29 to 1, with 17 abstentions. The voting was as follows:

*In favour:*

Algeria, Argentina, Brazil, Chile, China, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Ethiopia, India, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Maldives, Mexico, Morocco, Namibia, Pakistan, Peru, Philippines, Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Sierra Leone, South Africa, United Arab Emirates, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam

*Against:*

United States of America

*Abstaining:*

Austria, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Czech Republic, Estonia, France, Gabon, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Montenegro, Republic of Korea, Romania, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland]