

Human Rights Council

23rd Session

27 May – 14 June 2013

Agenda item 7, General Debate

Human Rights Situation in Palestine

**International Organization for the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination
(EAFORD)**

Hebron: Occupation on a Small Scale

Delivered by Mr. Issa Amro

Thank you, Mr. President.

I am very thankful to have the possibility to address this council.

I am from Hebron, in Palestine. Hebron reflects all aspects of the Israeli occupation on a small scale, because settlements have been installed in the very heart of the city. The presence of the Israeli settlers makes the life of my people a disaster. Security is nonexistent; nobody would protect us from settler attacks.

The right to housing and non-discrimination is violated. The main street has been closed to Palestinians by military orders. Only settlers can pass. More than 1000 families were forced to leave, and 1800 shops closed in favor of the occupying power. The unemployment rate is now over 70 percent. Nobody can deny this is apartheid.

The freedom of movement is violated by more than 100 road blocks, gates, and check points. This makes the life of Palestinians impossible in their own city. By now many human rights organizations - Israeli and Palestinian - describe Hebron as a ghost town.

Humiliation, body search of women and children is part of the daily life, as well as prevention from passing and detentions at checkpoints. There are even heavy restrictions on emergency ambulance travel, which depend most on the passage. In many times they arrived too late. With three check points on the way to the city's mosque even the freedom of religion is violated.

Mr. President, occupation forces and settlers together are trying to ethnically cleanse the area from Palestinians. We are losing our own city. What we are facing on a small scale is symbolic for the entire West Bank.

We urge the international community to not leave us alone in our struggle. Palestinians are humans. And humans have the right to life and dignity and self-determination.

Thank you for your attention

10 June 2013