

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

25th Session of the UN Human Rights Council

3 – 28 March 2014



Agenda item 7 Interactive Dialogue

Human Rights Situation in Palestine and Other Occupied Arab Territories

Statement delivered during the Interactive Dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on the Occupied Palestinian Territories

On Monday 24 March 2014 EAFORD delivered an oral statement during the Interactive Dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on the occupied Palestinian territories, Dr. Richard Falk, who presented his latest report to the Human Rights Council after his term came to an end at this session. The speaker thanked the Special Rapporteur for the outstanding work throughout his mandate and expressed NGOs concern in view of the ongoing expansion of illegal settlements.

Full Text of the Statement

Thank you Mr. President,

This is a joint statement by the International Organization for the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (EAFORD) with GICJ and Youth against Settlements in Hebron.

Our NGOs thank the Special Rapporteur for the outstanding work throughout his mandate and his excellent report, in which he clearly addresses the issues at stake. We regret that the government concerned did not cooperate with his mandate and that attempts have been undertaken to defame his character rather than addressing the problem at hand.

Mr. Special Rapporteur, as you underline in your report, the exploding expansion of settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territories have resulted in a system of apartheid, racial segregation and systematic oppression, which affects Palestinian human rights on all levels. It is especially alarming that such constructions have risen by 123 percent in 2013 with roughly 10,000 new settlement units being constructed since the beginning of the peace talks, which totally questions the seriousness of these talks.

We are particularly concerned that the Israeli Supreme court rulings are often also serving the political agenda and trying to legitimize illegal settlements. One example is the recent decision on the Rajabi house in Hebron. The building was disputed since 2007, when a group of settlers stormed the newly constructed Palestinian house, claiming its ownership. Although it was found that the purchase documents were forged, it was ruled on 11 March 2014 that the rights to House will be given to the settlers, against the will of its owner.

The decision will have the same impact as other settlements described in your report, such as new restrictions of movement, additional road closures and increased cases of settler violence in addition to the already tensed situation. It may finally lead to a total closure of the area to Palestinians including the cutting off of neighborhoods, the closing of more shops and increasing pressure on Palestinians to abandon the area as is the case with Shuhada Street and its peripheries.

We hope that the coming Special Rapporteur will take immediate action on this case. At this occasion we call on this Council to base the appointment solely on expertise rather than any other consideration and one more time thank the leaving Special Rapporteur for his outstanding work.

Thank you.
