

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

25<sup>th</sup> Session of the UN Human Rights Council

3 – 28 March 2014



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*EAFORD's Statement Delivered at the Closing of the 25<sup>th</sup> Session of the Human Rights Council*

On 28 March 2014 EAFORD delivered the last statement at the 25th session of the Human Rights Council. It reminded the International Community of the importance to uphold the fundamental principle of the universality of Human Rights and expressed NGOs concern in view of ongoing human rights violations under the pretext of combating terrorism, the lack of action in relation to Israel's persistent lack of cooperation and in this regard called on the Council to remain consistent in its judgments, committed to the enforcement of justice and vigilant in the pursuit of truth.

Full Text of the Statement

Thank you Mr. President,

This is a joint statement by EAFORD with a number of NGOs. As this session comes to an end our NGOs would like to express our respect for the important work of the Council, and reiterate our full cooperation with this body. As the High Commissioner outlined in her opening statement, the universality of human rights is one of the fundamental principles of international relations. All together we must work towards this end and not let ourselves be influenced by power or interests.

Our NGOs are deeply concerned that some countries are still getting away with impunity for their human rights violations under the pretext of combating terrorism, as it is the case for Iraq sometimes, whose government is fighting a war against its own civilians which has resulted in one of the biggest displacement crisis since the illegal invasion in 2003. We are equally concerned about the lack of accountability for the consequences of the invasion itself, which violated the fundamental norms of international law and shattered the country's socio-economic situation on all levels.

A serious matter of deep concern remains regarding the deficiency to address the issue of self-determination, as well as the persistent lack of cooperation of Israel with this Council, whose

return to the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) was undermined by a political bargaining process, including efforts to suppress standing agenda item 7. In including Israel in their regional group the members of the Western Europeans and Others Group (WEOG) now bear a particular responsibility in pressing Israel to end its longstanding colonial and racist policy, which has resulted in persistent and grave human rights violations.

Finally, we are also deeply concerned about the postponement of the appointment of the mandate holders. We wish to reemphasize that the choice has to be made in accordance with the criteria set out in the institution-building IB package and not based on political considerations.

Mr. President, the application of double standards in addressing human rights violations profoundly affects the credibility of the commitment of those who want to be at the forefront of the struggle for human rights. In this sense we call on this Council to remain consistent in its judgments, committed to the enforcement of justice and vigilant in the pursuit of the truth.

Thank you.

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