



46th Regular Session of the United Nations Human Rights Council
Item 9 - Racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related forms of intolerance, follow-up and implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action
Joint Oral Intervention¹
Date: 19 March 2021
Speaker: Ms. Shahd Qaddoura

ICC investigation important step towards ending Israel's impunity and apartheid

Thank you, Madam President.

For decades, Israel has maintained and entrenched its institutionalised domination and oppression of the Palestinian people and the colonisation of Palestine. During the current ongoing global pandemic, Israel's oppression and domination has manifested in the form of its discriminatory, unlawful, and racially discriminatory roll-out of COVID-19 vaccines.

Throughout the occupied Palestinian territory, apart from East Jerusalem, Israeli occupying authorities have reserved access to the vaccine to unlawfully-transferred Israeli settlers, denying the vaccine to Palestinians, aside from some Palestinian workers working inside Israel.

While this issue might be one 'obvious' example of Israel's discriminatory policies against Palestinians, it cannot be understood without appreciating the decades of fragmentation and de-development suffered by the healthcare system of the occupied Palestinian territory.

In this context, the ICC's criminal investigation into the Situation in Palestine constitutes an important step towards an end of Israel's impunity and apartheid and a crucial step towards the long-awaited justice for the Palestinian people.

Recalling the active role third States played in bringing an end to the apartheid regime in South Africa, we call on this Council and all its Member States to uphold the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, including the rights to self-determination and return, by adopting effective and coercive measures to overcome Israel's racial domination and oppression of Palestinians, amounting to the crime against humanity of apartheid, including by providing cohesive, public, and compelling support to the independence and impartiality of the ICC in all its operations, including its investigation into the Situation in Palestine.

Madam President,

Palestine can no longer be treated as an exception to the application of the international rule of law.

Thank you.

¹ Addameer Prisoner Support and Human Rights Association, Al Mezan Centre for Human Rights, Aldameer Association for Human Rights, Al-Haq, Law in the Service of Man, Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies, Human Rights & Democracy Media Center "SHAMS", Palestinian Centre for Human Rights (PCHR), Ramallah Center for Human Rights Studies, and The Women's Centre for Legal Aid and Counselling (WCLAC).