



HOUSING AND LAND RIGHTS NETWORK

Habitat International Coalition



BADIL RESOURCE CENTER

For Palestinian Residency and Refugee Rights

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Habitat International Coalition (HIC) and BADIL Resource Center for Palestinian Refugee and Residency Rights welcome the report of the UN Fact-finding Mission on the Gaza Conflict and encourage the Human Rights Council to endorse its recommendations and their effective implementation as the best available opportunity to give meaning to the term “Middle East peace process.”

The report finds that the duty to hold alleged violators to account belongs to their national institutions and authorities. However, none of the duty-bound parties has yet to meet that minimum requirement. Instead, these practices have been the subject of impunity for their perpetrators. Many of those same practices have endured over decades, while the states and authorities responsible variously dismiss them and/or endorse and celebrate them with highly rhetorical language. The report now cites such examples in the recent Gaza conflict, indicating the continuously deliberate nature of the crimes.

Israel’s “Operation Cast Lead” is a fresh example of the targeting of civilian shelters and shelter seekers, as well as destruction of civilian infrastructure, that has remained an unbroken continuum of Israeli military doctrine for decades. Such practice has been the subject of much anguish across the region, and disgust around the world. As the report recalls, Israel’s military practice of targeting civilian shelters and shelter seekers has been the subject of censuring Security Council resolutions no fewer than 17 times since 1953. However, no deterrent or remedial measures to address such crimes have followed.

The Council’s endorsement and conveyance of its recommendations not only pose an opportunity for it to help restore the integrity of the UN’s political bodies, but is vital to all civilians in our planet. By endorsing the recommendations of the UN Fact-finding report on the Gaza Conflict, this Council now can exercise both a duty and an opportunity to pursue justice for the civilian victims, as well as to restore faith in international law and its acclaimed legitimacy.

Impunity for the crimes exposed in the Gaza report must come to an end, and accountability must take its place if our planet is to endure as a civilized human habitat. States in this Council that seek to prevent this report’s recommendations for justice from reaching the effective remedial UN mechanisms will bear a liability to us all for the remaining future. Specious political excuses aside, everyone knows that the obstruction of justice does not a peace make. Therefore, HIC urges this Council to uphold human rights by endorsing the report and its recommendations, in order to pursue both: justice and its cohort, peace.