

BADIL Resource Center for Palestinian Residency and Refugee Rights

Friday 13th June 2014

Mr. President,

BADIL would like to thank Mr. Beyani, the SR on Internal Displacement, for his report on this crucial issue and reaffirm the importance of assisting and protecting the human rights of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs).

Arbitrary (forced) displacement has been addressed in international humanitarian law as well as in human rights law and criminal laws. Article 49 and article 147 of the Fourth Geneva Convention, relative to the protection of civilians in times of international armed conflict, prohibits - regardless of the motive - "individual or mass forcible transfers" as a grave breach of international humanitarian law. It could also be interpreted as a war crime or a crime against humanity under the Rome Statute of the ICJ.

Israel, the occupying power, has been committing grave breaches of human rights violations and breaching international law and international humanitarian law, by implementing systematic policies aimed at displacing Palestinians and altering the demographic composition of the country. Despite the nearly 7 million refugees who are denied their rights, today there are more than 170,000 IDPs in the oPt. Israeli policies of displacement and forced population transfer include, inter alia, house demolitions, denial of residency, segregation, forced evictions of families and communities, land confiscation, zoning and planning, installment of a permit regime, denial of natural resources and access to services, arbitrary suppression of legitimate resistance in addition to actions that take place in the context of the construction of the apartheid wall, and the expansion of settlements and military incursions.

Mr. President,

Just yesterday Israel demolished the Bedouin village of Al-Araqib in the Negev for the 66th time leaving hundreds of people without shelter in heavy rains.

Also,

Only this year Israel, the occupying power, demolished 248 structures which has resulted in the displacement of 492 people in Jerusalem alone and last Wednesday the Israeli army demolished a blind man's house in a village in the Jerusalem area. He had been living in his house since 1967.

In Gaza 12,500 people remain displaced following the destruction of their homes during previous Israeli military operations.

In this regard we call upon their parties, specifically other states, to meet their obligations under international law by taking practical measures to ensure Israel, the occupying power upholds its commitment to their obligations, in particular to respect and ensure respect for their obligations under international law, including humanitarian and human rights law, in all circumstances and to cease all policies and measures leading to a process of ethnic displacement (of the Palestinian people).

I thank you.