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-ENGLISH -

HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL
Ninth session, September 2008
Item 7 (OPT)

Oral statement

Ongoing Forced Internal Displacement and Dispossession of the Palestinian Population in the OPT

1. The Palestinian population in the OPT is systematically subjected to ongoing internal forcible displacement and dispossession by the Israeli occupying power on the grounds of nationality, ethnicity, race and religion.
2. More than 115,000 people are estimated to have been internally displaced during the last four decades of Israel's occupation in the OPT.¹ In the Gaza Strip Israeli military operations caused the temporary forced displacement of over 50,000 between 2000 and 2004 alone.²
3. Moreover, the lands confiscated from Palestinians are turned over to the exclusive use of the Jewish settlers and for building and expanding the Jewish-only colonies and related infrastructure. Since the Annapolis summit, Israel announced plans for construction in the OPT amounting to almost 30,000 additional illegal Jewish-only housing units.³
4. The severity and consistency of the forcible internal displacement of Palestinians by the Israeli occupying power amounts to a **policy of population transfer for the purpose of acquiring land and altering the demographic composition of the territory under its control.**
5. Internal forcible displacement and dispossession of Palestinians has been largely ignored by the international community. Rarely do UN bodies stress upon the population transfer that is taking place the OPT despite the manifest displacement that is occurring daily. In a context of siege against the people of the Gaza Strip, ongoing construction of the Wall, house demolition, settlement expansion and settler violence, **Israel's policy of forced displacement and dispossession of Palestinians must be scrutinized and proper action must be taken** in accordance with international law.

We call upon the Human Rights Council to:

1 BADIL, [Survey 2006-2007](#).

2 Human Rights Watch, [Razing Rafah: Mass House Demolitions in the Gaza Strip](#), October 2004.

3 Applied Research Institute -Jerusalem (ARIJ), press release, 18 July 2008.

1. Initiate a collaborative UN effort to examine the nature of Israel's oppressive and racist regime which includes many of the worst features of apartheid and is the root cause of the ongoing forcible displacement and dispossession of the Palestinian population in the OPT.
2. **Call upon Israel to revoke its policies and practices aiming at changing the demographic composition of the OPT through the forcible internal displacement of the indigenous Palestinian population, and to ensure just and effective reparation of the displaced Palestinians, including return and restitution of their land and properties.**
3. Implement the Collaborative Response to situations of internal displacement to prevent and respond to the needs of the internally displaced Palestinians in the OPT.