



*Please check against delivery*

**Statement on behalf of OIC by Ambassador Khalil Hashmi, Permanent Representative of Pakistan during ID with the High Commissioner on OPT**

**4 March 2022**

**Mr. President,**

The OIC takes note of the High Commissioner's report.

We express our grave concern over attempts to create a false equivalence between Israel, as an illegal occupier, and the occupied people of Palestine. There can be no legitimacy for a colonizing state whose crimes against humanity are well established under international law.

The OIC strongly condemns the continuing grave violations of international law and egregious human rights abuses by Israeli occupying forces as well as settlers. Forced evictions, demolition of homes, illegal settlements and demographic changes are all aimed at depriving the Palestinian people from their inalienable right to self-determination. Israel's laws, policies and practices have enabled the establishment and maintenance of apartheid regime.

We call on the international community to hold Israel to account for its continued defiance of international law.

Millions of Palestinians continue to bear the brunt of Israeli settlement enterprise. The OIC believes that HRC resolution-31/36 represented the Council's resolve to address this injustice. This mandate clearly stipulates producing a database of business enterprises, operating in Israeli settlements.

We urge the High Commissioner to fulfil this mandate in its entirety by annually updating the list and reporting to Human Rights Council on the current status of companies operating in settlements. We also request the High Commissioner to inform this Council regarding steps taken by her Office in overcoming challenges related to paucity of funds that impede producing and updating of the database.

I thank you