



**Statement on behalf of the OIC Group, delivered by Amb. Zaman Mehdi, Deputy
Permanent Representative, during General Debate Item 7
54th HRC Session
4th October 2023**

Mr. President,

We reaffirm the sanctity of Agenda Item 7 of the Human Rights Council and consider it as an integral part of the Institution Building package.

The scale of ongoing human rights violations in the OPT validates the importance of this agenda item.

We invite those who question the value of agenda item 7, to read the High Commissioner's report on the situation as well as ongoing blatant human rights violations of the occupation regime.

We also echo our support for the work of the COI and SR on OPT.

The OIC also requests OHCHR to continue updating the database of companies operating in settlements as mandated by resolution 31/36 and reaffirmed by resolution 53/25.

The OIC reaffirms that Israel's colonization, illegal settlements, annexation, and apartheid are recognized as egregious breaches and constitute grave, flagrant and continued denial of the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination.

It has been more than 75 years since the Nakba shattered Palestinian lives and uprooted them from their ancestral abodes. The OIC underlines that UNGA has to extend the mandate of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East ("UNRWA") – which remains the longest serving refugee organisation in the world.

The most disturbing aspect of the situation remains the continued impunity of the Israeli forces. Extrajudicial killings, violence, confiscation of land, forcible transfer, demolition of homes, arbitrary detention, torture, abuse and brutalization of children are some of the ugly manifestations of these violations.

The Israeli illegal settlements are at the core of colonial occupation and are being made possible through the commission of war crimes, crimes against humanity and the crime of Apartheid.



The OIC condemns the way in which Israel has depicted all of historic Palestine as Israel. It is deeply worrying that these attempts to purport complete erasure of the Palestinian people continue with impunity. The brandishing of such maps is an open declaration of Israel's illegal colonial designs and policies of ethnic cleansing and annexation of the Palestinian territory.

We echo the concerns of UN SPMHs that the forced eviction and displacement of the Ghaith-Sub Laban family and many other Palestinian families in east Jerusalem may amount to a war crime of forcible transfer and must be immediately reversed.

Mr. President,

The OIC urges this Council to uphold its universal mandate and hold the illegal occupier and grave violator of human rights accountable for its human rights violations. This is important for achieving a just two states solution on the borders of June 4, 1967 with East Jerusalem as the capital of the State of Palestine.

We also reiterate long standing global demand for ending the illegal occupation of all occupied Arab territories, including the occupied Syrian Golan and the Lebanese territories, and the continuing violations of the human rights of its people.