



**Statement on behalf of the OIC Group by Mr. Muneeb Ahmed, Counsellor, during
General Debate under Item 5**

61st Session of the UN Human Rights Council

(Geneva, 17 March 2026)

Mr. Vice-President,

Special procedures, mandate holders and all allied mechanisms are a source of strength for this Council. Their ability to discharge their functions, consistent with their respective mandates, the Institution-Building Package, and the Code of Conduct, is essential to advancing universal respect for human rights.

The OIC Group¹ is therefore seriously concerned at continued unfounded attacks against the UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian Territory occupied since 1967, Ms. Francesca Albanese. Based on misrepresented and fabricated claims, these attacks represent further attempts to silence an independent expert for carrying out her lawful mandate.

We have long warned of personal attacks against successive Special Rapporteurs on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian territories occupied since 1967. We condemn efforts to undermine these mandate holders solely for discharging the mandate entrusted by this Council. Attempts to distort statements or generate pressure through false allegations weaken the integrity of this Council as a whole.

We call for the immediate retraction of these baseless allegations and reaffirm our full support for the Special Rapporteur. We reaffirm also our support for the full enjoyment by the Palestinian people of all human rights, including their inalienable right to self-determination.

Thank you.

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¹ Except Albania