



General Assembly

Distr.
GENERAL

A/HRC/5/NGO/3
6 June 2007

ENGLISH ONLY

HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL
Fifth session
Item 2 of the provisional agenda

**IMPLEMENTATION OF GENERAL ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION 60/251
OF 15 MARCH 2006 ENTITLED “HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL”**

**Written statement* submitted by Nord Sud XXI,
a non-governmental organization in special consultative status**

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[30 May 2007]

* This written statement is issued, unedited, in the language(s) received from the submitting non-governmental organization(s).

No question involving the serious violation of individuals' human rights has been on the United Nations' and international community's agenda for as long as the question of the human rights of Palestinians. No other issue has remained on the Human Rights Council's agenda with such serious consequences for its victims as the issue of Palestine.

For close to forty years the right to self-determination has been denied the Palestinian people and their lives and well-being have been threatened on a daily basis by an occupation that has been determined to be illegal not only by countless human rights bodies, but also by the UN Security Council, the UN General Assembly, and the International Court of Justice. This occupation is perhaps the longest and one of the most serious ongoing violations of human rights in the world. It deserves special attention.

Even as the Human Rights Council meets for its 5th Session, the Israeli government is arbitrarily slaughtering civilians in Palestine with excessive use of force and the Israeli government is interfering with the political independence of Palestine by arbitrary detaining several ministers of the elected government.

These and other illegal acts by Israel has been repeatedly condemned by the United Nations Security Council, by the UN General Assembly, by the former Commissioner on Human Rights dozens of times, and by the United Nations treaty bodies more than a hundred times, and even this Council has condemned Israel's violations of human rights repeatedly. These condemnations have pointed out serious violations of international human rights law. All of these violations ultimately emanating from Israel's illegal occupation of Palestinian territory.

In his most recent report the Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of Palestinians, a renown South African human rights law expert, compared the actions by Israel against Palestinians to the *apartheid* he struggled against in his own country for so long. Since this report Israel has only enhanced its '*apartheid*' policies by repeatedly and illegally using excessive of force against Palestinians in Gaza and the West Bank, killing dozens of Palestinians.

The unabated, intentional state policy of violence and disrespect for human rights makes the problem of secure the human rights of Palestinians a clear test of the Council's ability

to protect human rights. If the Council cannot take steps to protect people who have been suffering since the time that the United Nations was created, the Council will undoubtedly be judged a failure.

If the Council does take effective action to protect the human rights of Palestinians, this will significantly enhance its credibility.

The primary body through which the Council works on human rights issues relating to Palestine is the “Special Rapporteur on the human rights situation in the Palestinian territories occupied since 1967 pursuant to resolution 3/1 of the Human Rights Council.” We commend the work of the Special Rapporteur, Professor John Dugard, and his most recent report to the 4th Session of the Council and we call upon the Council to renew the mandate of the Special Rapporteur until the end of the occupation.

We also hope that the Council and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights will pay special attention to the cooperation of the governments of Palestinian National Authority and Israel with the Special Rapporteur and we hope that the Council will ensure that it receives frequent reports on the state of this cooperation and acts decisively when cooperation is not forthcoming. The Special Rapporteur spearheads one of the Council most important matters and must be given full and effective support.

Needless to say, many in the world will be watching the Council in regards to this most troublesome of human rights problems. For many the plight of the Palestinian people serves as the benchmark for determining whether the Council has the courage to live up to its mandate.
