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Statement by

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Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Bangladesh to the UN
Report of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting
The Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the
Occupied Territories (Agenda Item 51)

07 November 2014

Mr. Chairman,

At the very outset, I wish to convey our appreciation to the Chair and the members of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories for their comprehensive report. My delegation aligns itself with the statements made by Iran on behalf of NAM and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia on behalf of OIC.

Mr. Chairman,

Although the report period covers from 01 July, 2013 to 15 May, 2014, nonetheless we cannot avoid speaking about the horrendous situation and plight of humanity that we witnessed helplessly for weeks that started from July 8, 2014 when Israel launched its **Operation Protective Edge** in Gaza Strip--- how can we ignore not to speak about air strikes, mortar shelling, wanton bombing and indiscriminate killing of unarmed and innocent people in Gaza? As per estimates, more than 2,200 people were killed, the vast majority being innocent unarmed civilian women and children.

Impact of this attack was appalling and cannot be erased from our memory soon. We were saddened more so as such wanton and indiscriminate attacks

and killings was perpetuated by a government, the people of which suffered discrimination and poor treatment for years and naturally, we thought that they have learned the lesson that hatred, discrimination and ill treatment and killing are not the solution. Unfortunately, it appears that they did not learn the lesson of history, and they failed to uphold human dignity. Yet we have not lost hope. The people of Israel, I have a hope, will rise to the occasion, will reflect and review on the savage and disproportionate actions of their government and will come forward to assist in ending this age-old hatred and killing by establishing a two-state solution living side by side with independent Palestine in peace and harmony.

According to the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), over 273,000 Palestinians in the Gaza Strip alone had been displaced as of 31 July 2014, of whom 236,375 (over 11% of the Gaza population) were forced to take shelter in 88 UNRWA schools. UNRWA, in fact, exhausted its capacity to absorb displaced persons, and overcrowding in shelters risked the outbreak of epidemics. In addition, nearly 1.8 million people were affected by disruption of water supply, 138 schools and 26 health facilities were damaged, and already ill-equipped hospitals in Gaza faced severe shortages of all kinds of essential medicine, medical supplies, power supply and the like. Due to Israeli Protective operation, blockade and bombing, prices of food and essentials in Gaza shoot up astronomically.

Israel targeted many homes in this conflict. This led to many members of the same family being killed. There has been 59 incidents of such bombing and shelling, in which 458 people were killed. Palestinian officials estimated on September 4, 2014 that 17,000 homes were destroyed.

There were seven shelling at UNRWA facilities in the Gaza Strip killing at least 46 civilians, including 11 UN staff. All of these incidents were the result of artillery, mortar or aerial missile fire which struck on or near the UNRWA schools. The bombing operation was wild and wanton and as a result 13 journalists were killed --- five were off-duty and two were covering a bomb disposal team's efforts to defuse an unexploded Israeli artillery shell. It was also reported that Israeli soldiers kidnapped Palestinian juvenile and after beating and torturing them used them as human shield.

Mr. Chairman,

We express our deep condolences to the families of Gaza, Palestine and Israel affected by this recent Gaza-Israeli conflict. The right to self defense

according to the UN Charter does not permit such savagery and cannot preclude the wrongfulness of such actions. Nothing can justify any killing and the killing of the UNWRA personnel who were trusted to serve the humanity and also massacres and maiming of children, women and men. Can this justify the wanton destruction of emergency shelters, homes, schools and civilian infrastructure, inflicting a humanitarian disaster with massive health, social, economic, psychological and developmental consequences and inflicting terror and trauma on an entire population? All of these Israeli practices are the clear violation of International Human Rights Law, the International Humanitarian Law and also in few cases tantamount to war crimes and crime against humanity. Bangladesh welcomes the decision by the Human Rights Council to dispatch an independent and international inquiry into all violations resulting from the **Operation Protective Edge**, the recent military aggression of Israel in Gaza.

Mr. Chairman,

According to report, Israel continued to expand existing settlements in the occupied territory and they approve newer settlements. Tenders were announced for 6,013 new housing units in Israeli settlements in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem and 9,712 housing units have been promoted in occupied Palestine. In addition, the Israeli Government announced for issuance of fresh tenders for settlements and advanced its plan for new housing units in occupied land. This continued construction of Jewish settlements in the occupied territories deserve serious attention of all. The international community made repeated calls to cease such activities and Israel has time and again expressed commitment to do so. The settlements present an existential threat to the Palestinian state, the two-state solution. The International Court of Justice described the violation by Israel of the Palestinian people's right to self-determination as the violation of an *erga omnes* obligation. Therefore, the violation is a matter of concern to all States. If we are serious about peace in the Middle-East, we must exert collective pressure on Israeli government to stop expansion of illegal settlements, freeze the expansion plan and dismantle the existing ones in line with its obligations under article 49 of the Fourth Geneva Convention. Israel may be asked to pay compensation and penalty for such illegal construction and settlement.

Mr. Chairman,

There are 5,243 Palestinian detainees held in 17 prisons, detention centers, and military camps in the occupied West Bank and in Israel. Out of them, 198

are children and the youngest child was 14 years old. Many of them are held without charge for a long time. Prisoners, detainees and captured persons in Israel are reportedly treated inhumanly, tortured in barbaric manner, interrogated brutally and often forced to accept the offences. Such are grave violations of human rights.

Mr. Chairman,

We urge Israel to fulfill its legal obligation as the occupying power. We urge Israel to ensure that all inhabitants are safeguarded against all acts of violence or threats; we urge to cease illegal detention of Palestinian people including children; to stop destruction of homes and land confiscation; to allow Palestinian people's free access to their lands, employment and natural resources; to desist from transferring its own Israeli population to the territories it has occupied; to lift its embargo against Palestinians and immediately open all border crossings or blockade to allow free movement of goods, persons and humanitarian aid.

Mr. Chairman,

We express our total solidarity with the Palestinian people and reiterate our full and unwavering support to the legitimate and inalienable rights of the Palestinian people to a sovereign and independent State. We demand complete and unconditional withdrawal from the occupied Palestinian territories including East Jerusalem and all other occupied Arab lands. Otherwise, peace, hope and prosperity of the people in the Middle-East will remain as elusive as ever.

Mr. Chairman,

As regards Syrian Golan is concerned, we reaffirm again that all unlawful occupation since 1967 are the clear violation of International laws, the UN Charter, the Security Council resolutions, and the Fourth Geneva Convention. We believe, to have sustainable peace and stability, it is imperative for the international community to safeguard the rights of the people and their sovereignty and territorial integrity.

I thank you Mr. Chairman.

