

**United Nations Human Rights Council
22nd Regular Session, 25 February to 22 March 2013
Agenda Item 7**

**ICJ Oral Statement in the General Debate under Item 7: Human rights situation in
Palestine and other occupied Arab territories
FACT FINDING MISSION ON ISRAELI SETTLEMENTS**

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Mr President,

The International Commission of Jurists (ICJ) calls on the Human Rights Council to strongly support the findings of the Fact-Finding Mission on settlements and to take all effective measures at its disposal to halt the Israeli policy on the construction, expansion and encouragement of settlements in the occupied Palestinian territory (oPt). Through the seizure and annexation of Palestinian land, settlements have caused the fragmentation of the West Bank, including East-Jerusalem, preventing, *de facto*, the establishment of a contiguous and viable Palestinian State.

This policy violates Israel's obligations under international law, including article 49 of the Fourth Geneva Convention, which prohibits an occupying power from deporting or transferring parts of its own civilian population into the territory it occupies. It has also had an adverse impact on the enjoyment of human rights by Palestinians, including, among others, the rights to equality before the law, freedom of movement, education, work and housing.

Palestinians have also been subjected to various attacks by settlers, including physical assaults, "price-tag" attacks and shootings. There has been a systemic failure to hold persons accountable for these human rights abuses. The rights of victims to effective remedies and to reparation have largely been denied.

Mr President,

The ICJ is deeply concerned that this settlement policy has allowed for the establishment of a segregated legal system under which Palestinians are subject to military orders and military courts. Other forms of segregation include settler-only roads, a comprehensive permit and checkpoint system and, most recently, Palestinian-only bus lines initiated with a view to preventing Palestinians from boarding buses with Israeli passengers.

These policies are discriminatory and violate Israel's obligations under international humanitarian and human rights law. This Council should call on the Security Council to adopt effective measures aimed at putting an immediate end to such discriminatory practices as well as to Israel's settlement policy.

I thank you.

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