

BADIL Resource Center for Palestinian Residency and Refugee Rights on behalf of the Palestinian Human Rights Organisations Council (PHROC)

Tuesday 24th June 2014

Mr. President, Distinguished Members of the Council,

The Palestinian Human Rights Organizations Council (PHROC) takes this opportunity to condemn the Israeli aggression currently underway in the occupied Palestinian territory (oPt) and the situation of the approximately 5500 Palestinian hostages held in Israeli prisons among them children, women, and the elderly.

Following the disappearance of three Israeli teenagers from illegal settlements on the 12th of June, 6 Palestinian teenagers have been assassinated and approximately 500 Palestinians from across the West Bank have been abducted by Israeli Occupation Forces. Of these, 77 have been placed in administrative detention, without any charge or trial. A further 51 Palestinians, who were released in a 2011 prisoner exchange deal, have been rearrested and transferred to detention centres in Israel. These arrests and detentions are a clear form of collective punishment against the Palestinian people and are a blatant violation of Article 33 of the Fourth Geneva Convention. Israeli Occupational Forces are committing large scale war crimes in occupied Palestine.

Moreover, on the 24th of April, approximately 100 administrative detainees launched a mass hunger strike in protest of their continued detention without charge or trial. The majority of the hunger strikers are currently on their 61st day of the hunger strike and their health is in critical condition.

Since the beginning of the strike, the Israeli authorities have undertaken a number of punitive measures; of utmost concern is the proposed force feeding bill that is due imminently before the Israeli Knesset. Force feeding is considered torture by the World Medical Association (WMA) 1975 Declaration of Tokyo, the 2006 WMA Declaration of Malta on Hunger Strikers, and the UN Convention Against Torture. If passed into legislation it will provide a legislative foundation for torture on an industrial scale.

We urge the Council to take immediate action to stop the Israeli aggression and prevent further deterioration of the Palestinian prisoners' conditions. We also call on the Council to find that Israel's proposed force feeding bill constitutes a clear violation of international norms and standards.

I thank you.