

**Permanent Observer
Mission of Palestine
to the United Nations
Geneva**



البعثة المراقبة الدائمة
لفلسطين
لدى الأمم المتحدة في جنيف

Palestine comment on report of Professor John Dugard by Dr. Mohammad Abu-Koash, Ambassador of Palestine to the UN in Geneva, before the Human Rights Council on Thursday 22 March 2007

Excellency,

Thank you Professor Dugard for your report and the introduction. You are a man of high integrity and professionalism and we admire not only your record in fighting apartheid in South Africa but also your noble dedication to human rights particularly in Palestine, the area of your mandate. We welcome your report and your true portrayal of the Israeli occupation as a blend of occupation, colonialism and apartheid. We will consider seriously seeking an advisory opinion by the International Court of Justice on the Israeli prolonged occupation and its practices in line with the points you raised in your report. We still hope that the Council will ensure the implementation of its resolution S-1/1 of 6 July 2006 including the dispatching of the fact-finding mission stated therein which has been blocked by Israel, the occupying power.

Our people have paid a dire price for opting for democracy. We are not bemused that sanctions have been imposed on the victim instead of on the aggressor. American presidents tend to be fair to the Palestinian people after they leave office. Jimmy Carter has been demonised by Israel for saying the truth when he depicted the Israeli occupation as a system of apartheid. Apartheid was abolished in South Africa but it survives in Palestine. The Council should be the spearhead of fighting against this sinister system which defies and tramples on all instruments of international law and on the very dignity of our people.

The question of Palestine is central in world affairs and it has been used and misused. The waves of extremism from which the world suffers owe their creation in a large part to the lack of determined policies and actions to end the Israeli occupation of Palestine and other occupied Arab territories. The policy of dispatching envoys pronouncing declarations about imminent solutions which merely serve to set the ground for the implementation of military and political plans in our region should change. It is abundantly clear by now that seeking to serve the interest of one party at the expense of the whole region has proved to be a lose-lose formula for all. In this regard, I would like to quote a far-sighted British politician, Churchill:

“Americans will always do the right thing, after they have exhausted all the alternatives”.