

EGYPT for AFRICAN Group
ITEM 7

Mr. President,

I have the honor to make this statement on behalf of the African Group.

The African Group, once again, reiterates its grave concern at the Israeli military attacks on the Occupied Palestinian Territory in Gaza and other areas in the West Bank.

The Group strongly condemns the ongoing Israeli attack that started nine days ago, resulting in the death of more than 120 Palestinians, including women, children and infants and hundreds of injured.

While condemning all acts of violence, the African Group deplores the extremely disproportionate use of force by the Israeli army and its resort to heavy indiscriminate bombardment of civilian dwellings to retaliate the launching of crude Palestinian rockets.

The African Group calls for the immediate and unconditional cessation of all acts of violence in both the

Palestinian territory and has escalated due to the daily and grave violations of the human rights and fundamental freedoms of the Palestinians that has been lately exacerbated due to the stronghold of the blockade imposed on Gaza .

There is a dire need for the relevant UN human rights mechanisms to pay closer attention to the deteriorating situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights needs to shoulder its responsibilities in this regard.

It is warranted to say that the credibility of this Council, if not of the whole UN System, is at stake today. If the Council were to maintain its relevance, it has to pronounce itself in an unequivocal condemnation of the continuous and escalating Israeli violations of the human rights and fundamental freedoms of the Palestinian People in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. Such a condemnation is an essential step to indicate the Council's resolve to closely follow and act upon the situation of human rights in the Occupied Palestinian Territory.

I thank you.