Introduction of an Israeli amendment proposing to remove funding for the Commission of Inquiry from a General Assembly draft budget resolution, U.N. budget (Fifth) Committee of the General Assembly

December 23, 2021

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My delegation requests an oral amendment to draft resolution A/C.5/76/L.17 under revised estimates resulting from resolutions and decisions adopted by the UN Human Right Council, as we strongly oppose the creation and funding of the latest Commission of Inquiry against Israel established by the Human Rights Council. This is yet another example of grossly discriminatory and flawed UN body, just the thing this forum should be working to abolish, not support.

Mr. Chair, allow me to present to you the background of this most recent Commission of Inquiry against my country. In May 2021, following the most recent escalation in Gaza, which was initiated by a barrage of Hamas rockets attacks on most major Israeli cities and towns. The Human Rights Council created a Commission of Inquiry, a CoI, to investigate Israel. It should be noted that half of the Council members, 23 out of [47] member states opposed or abstained on the vote to create the CoI. We would also stress that no Commission of Inquiry was created to investigate Hamas. The reasons why so many opposed the creation of this latest CoI were clear.

For starters, the mandate was yet another manifestation of the blatant anti-Israel bias in the Human Rights Council. Yet again, the Council created a purported investigatory body based on a mandate that pre-assumes Israeli violations of international law, rather than presuming innocence as required for such bodies. The investigation is to focus solely on Israel, with no mention at all of the internationally designated terrorist group Hamas. This, despite the fact that Hamas barrage of rocket attacks on almost all major Israeli cities and towns, including Jerusalem and Tel Aviv, was the very event that sparked the last round of fighting, and despite the fact that Hamas repeatedly commits double war crimes, purposely targeting Israeli civilians and civilian infrastructure on one hand, while hiding behind Palestinian civilians, who Hamas uses and abuses as human shields, on the other.

Moreover, all of the three experts appointed to head the latest CoI investigation have gone on record with clear statements supporting Palestinian claims, while condemning Israel. The appointment of experts who have well-documented and partial views on the matters they were appointed to review, flies in the face of the Human Rights Council’s own rules regarding neutrality and impartiality and further underlines the serious inherent flaws with the CoI.

Mr. Chair,

The latest CoI is also highly problematic in that it includes an open-ended mandate, with no clear end date. All other CoIs that have been established by the Council in the past have had a well-defined time frame, in clear contrast. If we consider this point from a 5th Committee budgetary perspective, this open-ended feature and broad and weighty long-term budgetary implications, and we must consider not only the budget proposal for this year, but for many years to come. Indeed, establishing a novel, permanent, standing committee, rather than a limited, temporary and well-defined commission of inquiry, is unprecedented and dangerous in terms of the long-term budgetary implications for the UN organization as a whole.

Countries who oppose the formation of the CoI will be asked to fund the commission indefinitely. This means that you will have to pay for this mechanism next year, you will have to pay for this mechanism in ten years, and you will have to pay for it in one hundred years.

Mr. Chair,

To conclude. Since its establishment in 2006, the Human Rights Council has set up 32 investigative bodies, with 9, nearly a third of these, focused exclusively on Israel. There has been disproportionate funding allocated to investigate Israel over and over again. I would hope that this body would not play a hand again in wasting limited and precious resources to fund yet another mock court, one with unprecedented, open-ended, unlimited mandate and an inflated budget and redundant staff. It is for this reason I urge you to reject the allocation of the requested resources for this most flawed and biased Human Rights Council investigative body. Accordingly, my delegation requests an oral amendment to draft resolution special subjects, and to insert to the resolution 1 para as follows: Decides not to approve resources related to resolution S-30/1. We ask delegations to vote with Israel in favor of the oral amendment.