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**Human rights situation in Palestine and other
occupied Arab territories**

Written statement* submitted by the Organization for Defending Victims of Violence, a non-governmental organization in special consultative status

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[15 May 2011]

* This written statement is issued, unedited, in the language(s) received from the submitting non-governmental organization(s).

Human rights situation in Palestine and other occupied Arab territories

The violation of human rights in the Occupied Palestinian Territories has been going on for 6 decades and unfortunately neither the United Nations nor its Member States have managed to fairly deal with the blatant violation of the fundamental rights of the Palestinians. Below are some of the instances of these violations over the recent months to show the concern of international civil institutions and society over the lack of multilateral and resolute condemnation of the occupiers of these lands:

1. Israel's continued attacks on the residents of Gaza, is the gross violation of the rights of the people of the occupied territories. With 16 deaths and 36 injured, March of 2011 was one of the bloodiest months in Gaza since the end of the Operation Cast Lead. Several international organizations have expressed concern over this, including the human affairs bureau of the Organization of Islamic Conference, whose special report on the human conditions in the Gaza Strip stresses that these attacks will have serious material consequences for the residents, because as well as targeting Gaza's international airport, farms, factories and properties of the residents of the region have been targeted by Israel.

2. On 10 March 2011, the UN Special Rapporteur in the Occupied Territories called upon Israel to put an end to illegal demolition of Palestinian homes in the West Bank. In his speech correctly stressed that the eviction of Palestinians from their homes, the demolition of homes, expansion of Jewish settlements and aggressive repossession of Palestinian homes in East Jerusalem were all blatant violations of fundamental human rights and the Fourth Geneva Convention. The Organization for Defending Victims of Violence states that from the beginning of this current year and according to nongovernmental sources from inside occupied territories, to-date Israel has demolished 96 Palestinian owned buildings in the West Bank 32 of which were residential buildings.

3. Despite the calls by the international community to completely halt the construction of settlements in the occupied territories and East Jerusalem, Israel has sadly been ignorant. We believe that these practices are in conflict with international humanitarian laws and an obstacle for the restarting of the peace process and reaching a comprehensive, just and lasting agreement for the Palestinians, something that the world public opinion insists on.

4. According to published reports by NGOs based in occupied territories, Palestinian prisoners suffer from terrible conditions. According to evidence they are only allowed visits with lawyers or their families when they make confessions. This type of interrogation of detainees is contradictory to international laws. According to these documents to get confessions the IDF commit various acts of torture such as tying prisoners to chairs for prolonged periods, denying them access to hygiene facilities, sleep deprivation, threats to hurt family members and degradation.

The Organization for Defending Victims of Violence believes that attention to these cases, which are not few in number, shows the depth of the conditions and numerous cases of human rights violations of the occupied territories. In this regard, the refusal of Israeli officials in being accountable towards the violations and crimes in the 22 day war, and their efforts to ridicule and dismiss the findings of the Gaza Conflict Fact Finding report – the Goldstone Report – for solely to further complicate the situation and also the increased mistrust of human rights advocates in the current procedures in international human rights monitoring, are things which we hope the Human Rights Council will halt this trend with wisdom.